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Surgeon's log

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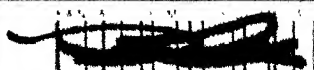
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THE SURGEON'S LOG



DAIBUTSU. KAMAKURA. A CLOSER VIEW.

THE SURGEON'S LOG

IMPRESSIONS OF THE FAR EAST

BY

J. JOHNSTON ABRAHAM

AUTHOR OF "THE NIGHT NURSE," "MY BALKAN LOG," ETC.

NEW EDITION WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS



NEW YORK
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TO
MY MOTHER
IN MEMORY OF HER SON
W. A.
AND OF HER GRANDSON
W. J. O. A.

PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

IT is almost eighteen months since the impressions here recorded first were offered to the public; and re-reading them now, after the interval, I am conscious that for me the first glad joy of it is over, I can never again recapture the shimmering golden glamour of it all. Indeed, looking back through the grey mist of England, I find myself tempted, with the wisdom or folly of later remembrance, to revise, rewrite, tone down some of the pictures that now seem too polychromatic in the retrospect. But I have refrained, feeling that thereby any value they may possess as truth would be mirror-dimmed by the breathings of the later mood—their individuality would thus be lost. Nevertheless, I have yielded to temptation to this extent; so many have written asking “what became of them afterwards?” that I have added a postscript to the original narrative telling what they thought of it all, and how they liked being put into a book.

Nothing has pleased me more than the numerous letters I have received from doctors—young men writing eagerly to know if I could find them such a ship in which they might have such experiences, older men enquiring furtively, apologetically, if their grey hairs could possibly be overlooked so that they too might find themselves amid similar surroundings.

Apparently romance dies hard, and so to all I have replied that, given the proper subjective attitude of mind, their pleasure under similar circumstances would

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be as great—for it is in ourselves, not in the events that occur to us, that happiness is to be found.

Of one thing I have assured them—and perhaps I may be permitted to mention it here for the sake of those who can only fare forth in imagination. There is a form of intellectual anæmia endemic in England to-day, almost all-pervasive in the literature and journalism of the country. Its main symptom is a belief that this mighty Empire of ours is a huge colossus with feet of clay, that the day of our greatness is over, that we are crumbling slowly to pieces, undermined by the waves of energy emanating from the more efficient nations hungrily waiting for the spoils that will follow our collapse. I have told them that to those who go down to the sea in ships all this is the merest moonshine, that on the outposts of empire there is no such thought, that outside England it is impossible to believe it. I have told them that when they meet and mingle with such men, and breathe their atmosphere, no matter what their obsessions may have been, they will return full of fresh hope, fresh vigour, fresh enthusiasm, soberly proud of the greatness of our people, confident in our destiny, feeling that come what may we can still face the world clear-eyed and unafraid. And if they carry back nothing more than this from their experiences it will be worth it all, a thousandfold.

London, W.

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THE SURGEON'S LOG

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CHAPTER I

FINDING A SHIP: LIVERPOOL TO PORT SAID

WHEN the Pathologist discovered what was the matter with me, I think he felt it more acutely even than I did; for I had had an inkling that something was wrong for weeks before I asked him to overhaul me; and it therefore did not come as so much of a shock to me when he diagnosed what I had already shrewdly guessed.

We had been through a lot of things together; and so the discovery distressed him very much.

"Of course, it means you'll have to go away," he said. "I don't know how on earth I'll get along without you."

The Pathologist and I are supposed to share a flat. As a matter of fact the place is dominated by the Pathologist's impedimenta: a microtome, two incubators, bottles of every shape and size—mostly with German labels—flasks, two microscopes under bell-jars, bundles of slides and boxes of coverslips, test-tubes, and Petri dishes, books and monographs, on chairs, on the table, on the floor—anywhere. Any space not occupied by these the Pathologist and I share. I made a firm stand

a year previously when he suggested keeping four "control" guinea-pigs in the flat—that I decided was too much.

The day after the examination, when we were sitting over the fire at night, smoking our last pipes, he said:

"Well! Have you decided anything?"

"I don't know what to do," I answered.

"What you want," he said sharply, "is to get away from all this sort of thing," waving his arm round. "You want to get clear of this atmosphere of 'wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.' You want to do nothing but eat, drink, and sleep—in fact, you want to play the complete cow and chew grass. In polite society, I should say go for a 'rest cure', but you know what I mean."

"But who's going to pay for all this?" I said dolefully.

"Ass! It's a ship you want."

It was curious. I had never thought of that; but it was obviously the right thing. I felt my depression melting like mists before the morning sun. Of course, that was it. A ship—I had always wanted a ship; but circumstances had never seemed favourable. So many seemingly important things were ever pressing that the idea, once strong, had gradually faded to the shadow of a dream. Now grim necessity had settled it. The important things seemed somehow to dwindle into nothingness before the spectre we had raised.

A ship. Already my spirits began to revive.

"You've hit it, old man," I said with conviction.

"That's better," he answered with a satisfied smile.

We got a *Daily Telegraph*, and commenced to go through the list of shipping companies. Tacitly we agreed that only boats going to the Tropics were suitable. A kind of reaction-hilarity took possession of us. The very names of the ports of call were as good as a volume of Kipling on that drear November night. We forgot the rain outside, the sloppy London streets, the taxis, the hooded hansoms, and the motor-'buses crowded with damp humanity. In our minds we were sailing over a moonlit summer sea, along a darkly outlined coast, with palm-trees sharply silhouetted against a sky of palest aquamarine, and the indescribable smell of jungle vegetation coming to us on the land breeze as we hung idly leaning o'er the rail.

"Now, which of these should I apply to?" I said.

"Try them all, and any more you can find," said the Pathologist.

Next morning I went into the City, to find, like Columbus, that I had got into a new world. It was all very strange and different. Imagine some one who has been accustomed to working only with a certain class of mind for years, who has merely to mention his name amongst that class, whereupon he is looked up in the "Directory," labelled, and judged as to capabilities to a nicety—in short, some one whom the expert eye immediately recognises as the correct wheel, or rod, or lever for a certain position, great or small as the case may be, in the intricate scientific machinery of London hospital life. Then think of such an individual suddenly finding himself in the position of having to seek

a post from some one whose occupation for years has been overseeing bills of lading, working out insurance risks, watching markets, and discussing rebates with turtle-fed directors. It was like talking to some one in a foreign language.

I was asked was I a teetotaler, could I speak German, what companies had I been in before, had I a "Discharge Book," and again was I a teetotaler? They wanted to know could I organise concerts, did I understand music, could I give references to two people of recognised position in Society, was I a British subject, had I an English qualification, and again was I a teetotaler? There were no questions as to my scientific abilities—that seemed to be of no consequence—but was I a teetotaler? All of which gave me furiously to think.

In a vague sort of way I began to feel as though I had descended in the social scale. Apparently ships' surgeons were not drawn from the highest ranks in the profession.

Was I a teetotaler?

The sum total of the first morning's impressions was distinctly depressing. It seemed there was no great demand for ships' surgeons. One person asked me how much I was prepared to pay for the round trip. I stared at him, and rapidly took my departure. He had my address, however, and next morning I had a letter from him offering me a housemaid's wages, should I care to go. I ignored that letter. Afterwards when I came to know the sea and shipping, I discovered that

that company paid no dividend to its deluded shareholders, but supported a baronet and a Jubilee knight in affluence—men who had risen from nothing, and now gave away large sums annually in charity.

Which thing is a mystery.

Another individual seemed to be quite eager to have me. That made me wary. I was beginning to "know the ropes." Inquiries led me to discover it would be part of my duties to vaccinate some thousands of Portuguese immigrants before they could land at certain South American ports. When I inquired how much extra I should get for this, I was told it was all in the day's work. In addition I found out that cases of yellow fever, smallpox, &c.—anything likely to detain the ship in quarantine—it was suggested, should be signed up as "Malaria," or something else innocuous. In other words, I was to perjure my professional soul, in addition to working overtime, for the wages of a street-scavenger.

This person also asked if I were a teetotaler, but only in a half-hearted sort of way, as if that were too much to expect. I informed him I was a dipsomaniac, and left

Some companies I went to had no vacancies for months; others, I found, required uniforms which would absorb six months' pay, and compelled their surgeons to equip themselves with instruments which may have been used in the time of Nelson, but had been antiquated ever since—instruments which, however, an omniscient Board of Trade still required ships to carry,

and the companies had managed, somehow or other, to squeeze their surgeons into paying for themselves.

Eventually a man I met in one of the offices put me on the right track.

"Why should you bother with passenger companies at all?" he said. "What you want is a ship bound East, a ship with no fixed itinerary, which may be away four, six, eight months, whose course is not known once it has discharged its outward-bound cargo. It's got to be a big ship with plenty of space to be comfortable out East, and one belonging to a good company, otherwise the food will be poor. You'll not find such a company in London."

"Where then?" I said.

"Liverpool's the place! London's not in it with Liverpool when it comes to shipping!"

So it was, as the result of much inquiry, several letters, and a hasty personal interview, that one winter's afternoon, some weeks later, I found myself in Liverpool in response to the following summons:—

"You are hereby appointed surgeon to the s.s. *Clytemnestra*. The vessel will sail from Liverpool on or about the 12th Jan., and you will please, unless otherwise notified, arrange to attend at the Birkenhead shipping office at 10.30 a.m. on the 10th Jan. to sign articles for the voyage.

"I am, &c.,

"MEDICAL SUPT.,

"———S.S. Co."

Liverpool is frankly a jumping-off place for any-

where, and the people are not ashamed of it. The place lives and moves and has its being in ships and shipping. Everywhere one sees the signs of shipping companies; and all the trams seem to run to the pier-head.

It is impossible to avoid ships and shipping in Liverpool. One might be in London for years and then not discover it was a shipping port. But in Liverpool every one talks "ship"; half the population in the streets seem to have a rolling gait; in the cafés the pretty waitresses ask what company you belong to when they have seen you twice; and at the music-halls the "artistes" invariably sing songs purporting to be of the sea as encores.

The sailor is the real king of Liverpool. Everybody in Liverpool loves the sailor, and is only too anxious to show him how to have a good time and spend his money while he is ashore; and it is he is the great man there till he has spent it.

Then he goes to sea again to earn more.

At the old-fashioned hotel in Birkenhead, where I was advised to stop, again the flavour of the sea was very much in evidence. A picture of a full-rigged ship sailing over carefully regulated waves was prominent in the hall. Faded photographic groups of officers in the Mercantile Marine adorned several of the public rooms. Curious shells and corals formed the usual mantel ornaments. I walked into a room which I thought was public, to find I had invaded the den of an old retired sea-captain. Every one knew I was a ship's surgeon, and took a friendly interest in me, which, to one used to the distant service of city cara-

vanseries, was at first almost embarrassing. My pale student complexion and general washed-out appearance, I discovered afterwards, had been put down by them to malaria. They were used to wrecks of men returning from the fever-zones of the Amazon, West Coast, and the Malay Archipelago.

Scotch engineers, Welsh mates, captains of sailing ships, their wives and daughters, made up the hotel's clientele.

Every one and everything was very intimate. The Welsh "boots" and general factotum was a mine of information on all things nautical. I drew upon him continually. The morning after my arrival he gave me minute directions how to find the "Shipping Office"; but of course I went wrong; and, after wandering a devious way amongst dreary-looking buildings, past scrap-heaps of old iron and broken-down boats, over railway lines, till I thought I was utterly lost, it was a corresponding relief when I suddenly came on a building labelled "Mercantile Marine Office."

There was a crowd of men hanging round outside, several boys, and a decrepit old fellow in uniform, with a Board of Trade badge on the collar of his coat. The lounging crowd of men made way for me; and I found myself in a bare sort of office, with a long counter at one side and a railed-off place at the upper end. An American stove stood in the middle of the office, and gave out a feeble wave of heat. All round the walls notices to mariners, warnings, regulations, &c., were stuck up. Two young clerks sat on stools behind the counter, taking no notice of any one, and ap-

parently having some great joke between themselves. Nothing seemed to be going to happen. I walked aimlessly round the room, staring at the notices. A youngish, fair-looking man stood at the stove warming his hands. Our eyes crossed.

"Excuse me, are you the doctor?" he said.

I confessed.

"Pleased to meet you," he said.

I answered rather uncertainly, not knowing whom I had got.

"First voyage?" he queried.

Again I confessed, feeling amateur was written all over me.

Just then there was a noise outside; and another man came hurrying in, and went behind the counter. After him the whole crowd strolled leisurely in. The two clerks woke up. One of them yawned. My new acquaintance nodded at the man who had come in.

"That's Mr. Thomas," he said.

I felt my ignorance. Doubtless the remark was illuminating; but I was none the wiser. I liked the look of Mr. Thomas, however. One of the clerks looked over at me.

"Are you the doctor?"

I admitted it; and he rushed away, and brought a "Medical Register," looked me over, asked my name, looked it up, asked my address, looked that up, looked me over again, and finally appeared to be satisfied. Then he collected a pile of documents together. Every one was now assembled; and at a nod from Mr.

Thomas he began to read in a monotonous sing-song voice from the document before him:—

“ . . . s.s. Clytemnestra, bound from Liverpool to Yokohama, and (or) any other port or ports within the limits of 72 degs. N. latitude, and 65 degs. S. latitude, trading to or from, as may be required, till the ship arrives at a port, or final port of discharge, in the United Kingdom, or Continent of Europe, between the River Elbe and Brest, for a period not exceeding eighteen months, as the Master may require. . . . ”

I was listening intently, but, looking around, saw that no one else was paying the least attention. It was all the same to them whether they “signed on” for San Francisco, Sydney, or Shanghai. It was a twice-told tale to them. And truly it mattered little whether they listened or not; for from the wording it was obvious we might legally be sent anywhere a ship could sail.

The sing-song voice seemed to act on them like a soporific. It went on indefinitely, reading more and more rapidly and indistinctly.

Suddenly it stopped; and then in a natural voice the clerk said:

“All members of the crew to be on board before midnight on the 12th Jan.”

This seemed to be the part they were waiting for. They all woke up. “Twelve o'clock Saturday night, mates,” said some one. The rest nodded.

“Get ready to sign now,” said the clerk briskly. “Officers first.” Some one signed. Then the clerk said:

“You, doctor!” and pointed to a column. In five

seconds I had signed away my liberty for eighteen months, agreed to abide by a mass of regulations I did not understand, and to sail on a ship I had never seen.

Mr. Thomas appeared suddenly then to become aware of my existence.

"How are you, doctor? Happy to meet you."

We shook hands cordially; and still I did not know.

Apparently that was all. The long *queue* were signing as I passed out. I had become a "seaman," a person whom the Board of Trade made elaborate regulations for, passed Acts of Parliament to protect, devised penal codes to punish, and other laws equally stringent to save from the rapacity of "owners."

It was my duty now to report myself to the Liverpool office.

A wooden-faced clerk took my name, asked me to be seated, and telephoned to the department.

Doors opened and shut, people came in and out, clerks popped heads through compartments and answered questions. I watched it all in a detached way. It did not concern me. Presently there was an irruption.

A little wrinkled old Chinaman in full dress of ceremony—black skull-cap, carefully braided *queue*, wide black alpaca jacket and trousers, and black silk shoes with thick white soles—came into the office, and marched straight to one of the compartments. For the first time in my life I heard "pidgin" English. Up to then I had thought it more or less a product of the novelist's imagination; but here it was in all its native impurity.

"Belong No. 1 *Clytemnestilla*. I wanchee pleeceman," he said.

The clerk behind the counter smiled.

"All right, No. 1, what for?"

"Two-thlee piecee men makee talk, lun away allee-same one piecee," he said very earnestly.

The clerk tried to look grave.

"And you want a policeman to keep them from leaving the ship?"

The No. 1 nodded; and just then my friend of the morning—Mr. Thomas—came in. He looked at the No. 1 and then at the clerk.

"What's our No. 1 up to?" he said.

"Says some of your Chinamen want to break ship, and comes here to ask us to get a policeman to stop them, Mr. Thomas."

The No. 1 nodded in confirmation.

"All right, No. 1; pleeceman come to-night, Maskee," said Mr. Thomas.

But the No. 1 was not satisfied with that. He knew if any of his crew escaped he would suffer in pocket; and when a Chinaman thinks his dollars in danger he is difficult to satisfy. Eventually they had to take him into an inner office and relieve him of all responsibility.

In the meanwhile Mr. Thomas came over to me.

"I suppose you're waiting for old Farquharson, Doc.?" he said.

Then, with the characteristic, naïve, ever-present contempt which the man of his hands always has for

any one or anything pertaining to the art of the scrivener, he added:

"I hate coming to offices. They're bothering me now about some hides lost at Macassar last voyage. It's annoying when you want to be at home every minute you can before you sail."

I caught at the last half of his sentence.

"Then we sail together?" I said.

He laughed. "Of course! You didn't know then that I'm Chief Officer of the ship you've 'signed on' for?"

"I'm jolly glad to hear it," I said. He nodded.

"Well, since we're on the subject, here's another of your shipmates, the Chief Engineer," he added as a large rubicund figure appeared in the doorway, and came over smiling to us.

"Mr. Halahan—our new Doc."

Mr. Halahan said he was "pleased to meet" me in a strong Belfast accent that my heart warmed to immediately.

I went on board finally the evening before we sailed. It was close upon midnight. A solitary policeman at the dock gates directed the cabman, pointing to the far-off oblong outline of a shed black against the glare of the great arc lamps beyond.

"They're loading still. Good night, sir! Thank you! Pleasant voyage, sir!"

In the morning I was awakened by a steward tapping at my door. He had brought my morning coffee.

"What time would you like your bath, sir? Doctor usually has it at seven bells."

"All right. That'll suit me," I said composedly, successfully concealing, I hoped, my total ignorance of what "seven bells" meant.

Later, as I stood watching the long line of docks that in the morning mist represented England, I heard a voice at my elbow.

"We're leaving God's own country, Doc." It was the Chief Engineer, who had come up from below as soon as we had got clear into the Mersey. He had a piece of "waste" in his hand. An engineer is never quite happy unless he has a piece of "waste" or a "sweat-rag" handy.

"I'm always glad to get back, and I'm always glad to get away again," he said. "Queer, isn't it! When you're in the East you feel sorry for the poor devils who have to live there, and know they envy you the fact that you soon will be homeward bound. When you've passed the 'Rock' (Gibraltar) you count every hour till you've sighted England. When you've been home a few days you begin to dread the thought of leaving again so soon, and make up your mind to look out for a shore billet at once. But you never do take that shore billet. When you've been home a fortnight, and have seen your mother and one or two other people that matter, you begin to feel restless again. You want the sun, the sky, the vivid colours, the long calm days at sea, the quiet of the deck, the regular monotonous sound of the screw—you ache for it all again; you want the Oriental deference you have been accustomed

to; you want—you don't know what you want, but you do know you want to get out of England. You laugh at yourself after a few voyages; but it's got into your blood by then, and you can't help yourself. You're ruined for shore life. You'll know all about it when you come back, Doc."

We were leaning on the rail, looking for'ard.

"Just look at Thomas," said Halahan (whom I shall call the "Chief" in future); "he's coming aft now. Everything is wrong with him this morning. Home-sick. Young wife. A sailor should never marry."

Certainly Mr. Thomas was in a pessimistic mood. He stopped on his way to us to make some disparaging remark to the bo'sun.

"Call himself a pilot," he said, apropos of nothing, coming up to us from the main deck. "He's let that Shire boat and the *Circe* through in front of us. The *Circe* thinks she's faster than us. Now he's given her two hours' start."

"Pilots," he muttered, "think they own the earth. You bring a ship all round the world in safety; they take her up the Mersey, and then claim credit for the whole voyage."

The Chief laughed. "All mates, and most 'masters,' can't stand pilots," he said to me in a stage whisper.

"How would you like a stranger coming down and messing about in your engine-room?" retorted the mate.

"I should tell the No. 1 greaser to pour oil over him till his bearings cooled down," he answered grimly.

"H-m. We can't tell the quartermaster to throw

him off the bridge—worse luck. That's where you have the pull over us."

"Mr. Thomas!" came a voice from the bridge-deck above. The mate straightened up sharply.

"Yes, sir!" he said, and disappeared up the ladder.

"That's the 'Old Man.' Have you seen him yet?" said the Chief.

"No," I answered.

"He's all right," he said simply. It is the greatest commendation one sailor can give another.

A burly form came down from the "bridge-deck" above, followed by the mate. I had never met John Bull in real life; and, though I was familiar with him in political cartoons, had come to think of him as rather a mythical person—a creature of the imagination. It was therefore somewhat of a shock to meet him face to face, disguised as a captain in the Mercantile Marine. Instead of a curly-brimmed silk hat he wore the company's regulation cap. I looked for the Union Jack waistcoat. It was not there. But the one that was, covered an equally expansive chest. The top-boots were absent, as was also the hunting crop. I regretted the top-boots, but penetrated the disguise at once.

The mate presented me.

"This is our doctor, Captain Tucker."

He nodded. It was just the sort of nod John Bull would be expected to give. It meant: "I don't quite know what sort of fellow you are yet; but, if I make up my mind to like you, I don't care what any one else says about you."

"Can't make your name out, Doc," he said. "You write such a confounded bad hand, dashed if I could read it in the articles."

I confessed the name my father had saddled me with, and apologised for the cryptic handwriting.

"It's part of the training of a doctor to write badly," I explained. "A prescription is a mysterious enough thing in itself; but when it is written by a first-class bad hand, like mine, it becomes a talisman."

His eyes twinkled; and I felt we had got *en rapport*.

"Oh, that's it," he said, and passed on into his cabin.

On the bridge the quartermaster struck "one bell." On the fo'castle head the man on the look-out repeated it. A few seconds later the second steward appeared at the companion hatch and violently rang a handbell.

"Breakfast," said the Chief. "Come on, Doc.," and he led the way below.

At the mess-room door we paused. The captain had not yet entered; and I discovered it was etiquette to wait until he arrived. It was the first glimpse I had of the majesty of the "master" of a ship, representing as he does the King, the Law, and the British Constitution, on the high seas.

Presently he came, and took the head of the table. My place I found was on his right, opposite the mate. The other officers had places further down. The engineers, with the exception of the Chief, who dined with us, had a mess-room of their own. I looked round curiously to see the place that was to be our home for the next six months, and wondered how we should all

get on in the enforced intimacy so unavoidable on a ship.

Half an hour after breakfast I was just finishing my last letters, as I was told it would be the only opportunity we should have until we reached Port Said, when I heard a voice coming down my ventilator:

"Hurry up, Doc.! The pilot's going! Got your letters?"

I rushed on deck to find we had slowed down for a steam-tug which was rapidly approaching us on the starboard bow. Presently she sheered off a point; and a boat putting out from her drew alongside. One of our crew caught the rope thrown to him, the pilot swung down the ladder, waited for the swell to rise, and dropped neatly into the boat. Away he went with a wave of his arm to the "Old Man" on the bridge, down came the pilot flag, the ladder was hauled up, and soon the boat and tug were dancing specks in the wake.

"Now we've got the ship to ourselves," said the mate with a grunt of satisfaction.

After "tiffin" I went on deck again. On the bridge the second mate walked stolidly to and fro. Close to me two Chinamen, black with coal-dust, clad in thin blue dungaree, each with his pig-tail rolled in a tight knot behind, and with his bare feet hooked in wooden sandals, dumped ashes down the shoot into the sea, accompanying each heave with guttural cries. On the fo'castle head the man on the look-out tramped steadily backwards and forwards. The rest of the ship seemed dead. No one was about, and the cold soon drove me

below again. Here also everything was still. I looked into the cabin next to mine, to find the third mate fast asleep. It was his watch below, and he was taking advantage of it to get as much sleep as possible. As for me, I had no watch to keep, no night bell to rouse me in the darkness, no ward telephone to bring me, half wakened, half clothed, in the small hours of the morning to watch the last agonies of the dying in the dim-lit long white ward, where shrouded figures slept in rows, unconscious of the shadowy wings of Azrael hovering over them.

Snuggled down on my settee, the chant of the screw came to me with a faint monotonous regularity, infinitely soothing. The water swished murmurously alongside, like a lullaby in an unknown tongue of liquid vowel sounds. The peace of the sea fell over me as with a mantle. Time melted into nothingness—to-day, to-morrow, yesterday. Time! What was time?

The entrance of the steward woke me. He had brought my tea. My book was on the floor. There were sounds of movement overhead, of feet shuffling. A rough staccato voice said:

“Relieve the wheel, and look-out!”

It was the “watch” changing. Presently the shuffling died away, and the monotone of the screw slipped again into the unconscious rhythm of life. An interval elapsed, then sounds came again. The third mate had wakened and was singing softly, for company, to himself:

"Oh, Whisky made me pawn my clothes
Whisky, Johnny?
Oh, Whisky gave me a purple nose.
Whisky for my honey.

"Oh, Whisky killed my poor old dad.
Whisky, Johnny?
And took away all the sense he had.
Whisky for my honey."

A hoarse voice here interrupted him. "One bell, sir!"

It was the quartermaster notifying the approaching change of watch. "All right, quartermaster! I'm coming!" I heard him answer.

A few minutes later the round shining face of the Second Officer appeared in my doorway. He looked at me cautiously, as if he were expecting something.

"All right, Doc.?" he queried.

"Yes. Quite all right."

"Feeling up to dinner?"

As a matter of fact I wasn't. The hours for meals seemed to come round with startling rapidity. I stated this to the "Old Man" in explanation of my want of appetite. He waved it aside politely but firmly, and stated his opinion that I was "sickening for something."

"Never mind, Doc.," he said encouragingly; "we'll make a sailor of you yet." And to illustrate what he meant proceeded to get the better of an enormous menu.

It was an astonishing feat. Undoubtedly he was a mighty trencherman. The others, good men and true, were not in it with him. He made me think of all sorts

of incongruous things—beef, beer, and the British Constitution, City dinners and the Lord Mayor's coachman, prize Shorthorns and the Agricultural Hall, gout and dyspepsia—all in one breadth.

"My appetite's not what it was," he admitted at the end of dinner. "I don't feel a bit hungry now."

He talked all the time he was eating, keeping the conversation going. When there was a lull every one kept quiet till he re-started. The mate stared solemnly at the cloth. The Chief smiled quietly to himself, or looked over at me. I gathered that it was not etiquette for a subordinate to start any new subject of conversation in the presence of the "Old Man." The doctor was the only one who could afford to neglect his opinion, or differ very violently from him in argument. The Chief also might venture to disagree, though not with the same freedom. But an executive officer—no, it was better not. These things slowly dawned upon me during the course of this my first day.

Presently the "Old Man" sighed comfortably, the sigh of repletion.

"I suppose, Doc., we'll have to get back to work," he said.

"I suppose so," I echoed.

This was the invariable signal that dinner was over. He said it to me every night at sea for the following six months; and I made the same invariable response. The mate told me he had been saying it to every doctor for years. We followed him slowly out of the mess-room, each to his own quarters.

It was not until we had passed the Bay of Biscay that I found my sea legs and made my reappearance in the mess-room. The "Old Man's" eyes twinkled when on the third day I turned up at breakfast. The mate nodded solemnly; the second mate, grinning cheerfully, made way for me to pass.

"Try some 'dry hash,' Doc.," said the "Old Man." "Must have some 'dry hash.' No man can call himself a sailor who doesn't like 'dry hash.' "

He proceeded to help himself to about a quarter of the dish, added two fried eggs and several slices of bacon, and fell to. Previously he had had fish. Afterwards he had a mutton chop and fried potatoes. This, with sundry cups of coffee, toast and marmalade, made up his breakfast.

"Always have 'dry hash' on the menu whenever possible," he explained. "Reminds me of the old sailing-ship days when I was a boy. What do you think of it, Doc.?"

"Fine," I said. I could have eaten anything that morning.

"Thought we'd make a sailor of you," he remarked in a gratified tone. "It's the greatest test of a sea-cook I know, to be able to make 'dry hash' right. This man's a treat. What do you think, Mr. Thomas?"

"Quite good," replied the mate laconically.

"Ever taste 'dogs body,' Doc.?" continued the "Old Man."

"No," I answered promptly.

"Oh, it's not so bad as that," he laughed. "Don't suppose our cook would know how to make it," he

added regretfully. "Only a real old 'shell-back' would."

On the question of food the "Old Man" was inexhaustible. The subject interested him profoundly. He was always ready to experiment on anything new. When we were ashore in port together, later, he was ever willing to investigate any dish he had not tasted before. His reputation, I found, was known all over the Far East. His delight in eating was so naïvely transparent that people asked him everywhere, and usually contrived to have something new for him to sample, much to my profit, as we were invariably asked out together. That he was quite aware of the amusement he caused I was soon quick to discover. But it affected him not at all. Like Falstaff he was content to be a source of wit in others. In reality he secretly enjoyed leading them to believe they were poking fun at his expense, unknown to him. When I grasped the situation it caused me infinite joy. The Machiavellian-Gilbertian ponderosity of it was so ruminatingly droll. It pleased them; it pleased him, if possible, more—every one was pleased. What more could one wish for?

Amongst the Chinese I discovered he was vastly esteemed on account of his Gargantuan prowess. Merchants waited to send their cargo home by his ship simply because, when invited to their table, he had done them the honour of out-eating every other European present. To be fat is to look like a mandarin in the Celestial Empire; and no one could deny his pre-eminence in that respect. He certainly was immense. I have seen his great bulk overawe truculent Japanese coolies in a way nothing else could; for the Japanese,

too, by heaping honours upon their enormously fat wrestlers, show the same curiously Oriental reverence for obesity as a sign of power which the European mind vainly tries to understand.

In spite of these facts, however, he was beginning to get seriously alarmed by his continual increase in weight, as I discovered a few days later, when he had made up his mind to confide in me. But at the time, of course, I knew nothing of that.

Breakfast was almost over. The second mate had gone to relieve the third when the "Old Man" rose.

"We'll start inspection this morning if you're all right, Doc."

"Quite all right," I hastened to assure him.

So I had my first initiation into work; and morning inspection became a daily routine for the rest of the voyage, every day at sea. The "Old Man," the mate, the Chief, and I formed the inspecting body. First we went for'ard to the forecabin. Here the petty officers and quartermasters had their cabins—the carpenter, familiarly known as "Chips," the bo'sun, the lamp-trimmer, known as "Lamps," the four "quartermasters," and a "deck boy," who acted as their steward. The "Old Man" peered in everywhere, and remarked about several things to the mate. Then we went aft again, and inspected the cook's galley to see that everything was clean. After that down to the well-deck aft, to the seamen's quarters, in the stern. The English sailors were quartered on the starboard side, the Chinese firemen to port. These latter had a special rice-cook of their own; and the "Old Man"

gave him a dressing-down about the filthiness of his galley without ever looking inside.

"Sure to be dirty," he remarked to me. "A Chinaman isn't healthy unless he's dirty. The Japanese are clean but dishonest. The Chinaman is honest but filthy. Cleanliness doesn't go with honesty in the East. In fact, most things go by contraries to the West."

So he gave the rice-cook a thorough rating as a stimulus; and the man took it all with the inscrutable face of the Oriental. It was impossible to tell whether he even knew he was being censured. Then we went into the Chinamen's fo'castle.

It was there, for the first time, I smelt the indescribable smell of the East—the smell of every inhabited place beyond Suez, the smell of foetid narrow streets, of teeming populations, of temples and joss-sticks, of jealously guarded houses, of tropical suns beating upon rotten vegetation, of palm oil and patchouli, of sandalwood and copra, dried fish and all the thousand-and-one abominations that make up the sum total of it all.

It is a smell you loathe at first, get used to, grow to like, and finally, when you get back in clean, fresh England, at intervals have a hungry longing for you would do almost anything to satisfy—a nostalgia that starts an unrest in your blood, sends you down to the docks to watch the great ships outward bound, and makes you envy the faces looking over the rail saying good-bye to England.

It was a long, narrow, dim-lit place, with two tiers of box-like bunks around three of its walls. Some of the men were lying asleep in their bunks; others, clad

only in thin dungaree trousers, their lean, naked yellow bodies otherwise exposed, were playing some noisy game in which wooden blocks were banged with much chatter on the rough deal bench that served them for a table. One man was having his head shaved, by the barber of the company, with a razor that looked like a pen-knife. Crouched beside the stove a thin worn figure sat smoking from a long brass pipe, which he put stealthily away when we entered.

"Opium!" said the Chief quietly to me.

Littered all round, in corners, in bunks, everywhere, were quaint-looking boxes fastened with elaborate locks, clothes, sandals, rubbish in buckets, vegetables, bits of dried fish and herbs hanging from the roof, gaudy almanacks fastened to the walls, and quantities of cheap English umbrellas tied up in bundles in every corner—the Chinaman has a passion for collecting one-and-sixpenny umbrellas. In the sternmost corner a few joss-sticks, burning in a tin of sand before a tiny tinsel-gauded shrine, cast a faint pervasive odour all around.

The "Old Man" stumped resolutely to the centre of the fo'castle; and we followed silently. Suddenly he snorted:

"This place is like a d—d pig-sty. Where's the No. 1?"

The Chief picked out a man.

"Tell No. 1 captain wanchee."

Presently the little squat Chinaman I had seen in the Liverpool office asking for a policeman appeared. His

face was absolutely immobile; but his little black eyes had the furtive look of a rat's.

The "Old Man" fell on him with a loud voice. His language about the state of the fo'castle was vitriolic. He seemed to be in an ungovernable rage. He cursed in English. He also made remarks in Chinese which, the Chief told me, were not complimentary to the female relatives of the listeners. They had been learnt in the process of years from many hands, and were constantly being added to, as he found them much more effective than Billingsgate. He vituperated till we were half-way across the deck again; and the little man following said never a word. Once or twice he squirmed slightly at some specially choice bit in Chinese; but the English left him undisturbed.

Once upon the saloon-deck the "Old Man" turned to me with a faint twinkle in his eye.

"Exhausting, isn't it, Doc.? Got to sling it into them hot. Same every voyage. Filthy ruffians, aren't they?"

"They're a lot cleaner than plenty of English firemen I have sailed with," said the Chief, who felt this to be an oblique reflection on the engine-room staff, and, like every man worthy of his salt, wanted to stick up for his own.

"Never could see any good in any d—d foreigner, Dutch, Dago, Nigger, or Chink," said the "Old Man" sturdily.

"Good old John Bull!" I murmured to myself.

"Don't you think so too, Doc.?" he said, turning to me.

"Thinking so is the secret of England's greatness," I answered diplomatically.

It was a beautiful clear day, with just a suspicion of chilliness in the air. The little wavelets lapped lovingly alongside. Ships passed us on either side, for we were in the regular ocean thoroughfare. Far out the white wings of a "wind-jammer" rose like a cloud on the horizon. The mate was busy for'ard. The Chief and I hung listlessly over the rail. One of the crew was getting the ship's sails out from the fore-peak to air them in the sun.

"Fat lot of good they'd be," said the mate, coming aft. "In the old days," he added regretfully, "they took the *Nestor* into Bombay under sail, when she broke down off Sokotra. We don't need sailors now. Look at those fellows for'ard. They might as well be painters."

Half a dozen A.B.s under the orders of the bo'sun were squatting on the main deck, with chipping hammers and cold chisels in their hands. They were all clothed in much-worn dungaree; and each carried the inevitable sailor's knife, in its sheath, stuck in his belt behind the right hip. In their headgear alone they showed variety of taste. Caps were predominant. Two wore broad-brimmed hats of what I afterwards came to know as Samarang bamboo plait. The bo'sun, a morose, inarticulate Welshman with wide Celtic eyes, was resplendent in a tropical helmet, once white, and brass earrings. Months later, when I came to know him well, and caught him in a moment of expansion, I asked him what he wore the earrings for; and he told

me they had cured him of moon blindness got on a "down-easter" sailing from 'Frisco to Montevideo. Now he was marshalling his men to start chipping the inside of the bulwarks; and soon the steady click, click, click of hammers resounded throughout the ship.

"She'll be painted three times over before we get back to Liverpool," said the mate.

"Why?" I inquired in surprise.

"Rust," he answered tersely. "Got to keep on painting. Salt water plays the deuce with iron. We took her into Liverpool a month ago, spotless, shining like a bride. In a week, with coal, and cargo, and careless handling, they made her look like a dirty old 'Geordie' [Newcastle tramp]."

"The soul of a mate is eaten up with paint. He thinks, dreams, and talks paint and nothing else from port to port," said the Chief.

"When I think of an engineer I think of oily smudges," retorted the mate.

"There you are, Doc. He divides the world into those who paint and those who spoil that paint. Didn't I say his mind was 'paintish'?"

All the next morning we were running down the coast of Portugal. The "Old Man" was in great form; we had stolen a march on the *Circe* in the night, keeping closer in, and he said we'd probably be able to signal "Sagres" before her.

As the morning grew we kept running closer and closer in, till at one o'clock we sighted Cape St. Vincent, with its Moorish-looking lighthouse on the top,

perched on the extreme edge of the promontory. Painted bright yellow, with a tower at either corner, it looked for all the world like a child's wooden toy house at our distance from the shore.

But it was not the lighthouse we were making for. Round the corner, past the lighthouse, we came upon a round drum of a building with a flagstaff. The Chief and I gazed intently at it with our glasses.

"Sagres," he said.

As we swung round, the "Old Man" had had four coloured flags run up from the flying bridge. It was the ship's name in international code. We watched intently for the response. In the afternoon sun the station seemed as dead as the dodo till just as we came abeam, when suddenly a pennant of brilliant red and white broke and fluttered at the top of the flagstaff, stayed a few seconds, and then came slowly down again.

"That's the answer," said the Chief. "Your mother and mine, 'Old Man's' wife, and the mate's will read in to-morrow's paper; 's.s. *Clytemnestra*, Liverpool for Yokohama, passed Sagres.' They won't know how it's done; but that's it. Let's go below. It's deuced cold."

Early in the grey of morning we passed the town of Gibraltar crouching below the dimly seen outline of the great rock fortress, Point Europa sending a half-seen questioning finger out towards us.

We were in the Mediterranean; and in a few hours I came to the conclusion it was distinctly warmer.

"It's no use thinking of deck-chairs yet," said the Chief, who, like most engineers, was a cat for comfort.

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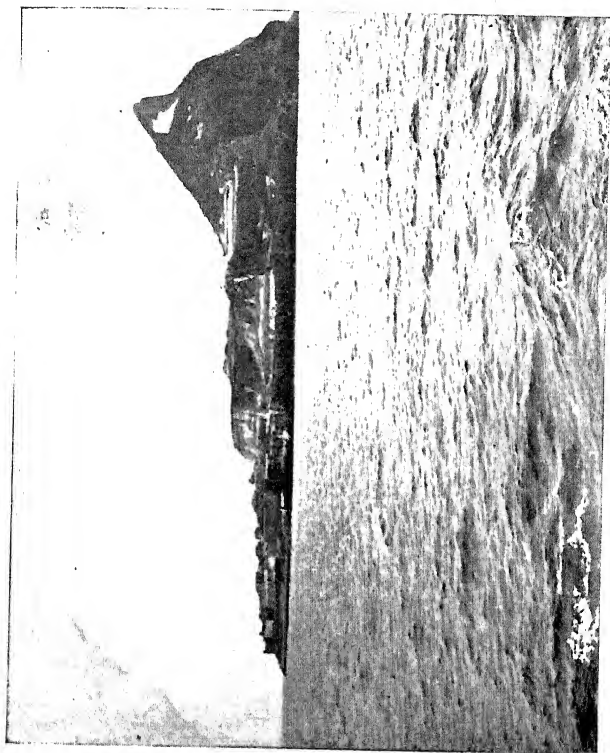


Photo: Dr. Shipway.

GIBRALTAR.

[Facing page 30.]

It was in the "middle watch" that night I got my first case.

"You there, Doc.?" It was the third mate's voice.

"Yes. What's the row?"

"Captain's compliments, and one of the quarter-masters is delirious. Would you mind seeing him?"

I tumbled out shivering from the warm bunk, and hurried into some clothes.

"Where is he?" I said.

"For'ard. Port side. Third cabin!"

It was a little man from Inverary. He was crooning away to himself in the Gaelic, tossing his arms about. He felt like a furnace. I held the thermometer up to the light.

"How much?" said the third mate.

"104° F.," I answered.

Together we went back, feeling our way along the deck. The night was very dark. An odd star peeped at us between the hurrying clouds. The square blackness of the deck-houses amidships loomed like the head of a threatening monster over us, the two forward lights of the captain's cabin glaring at us like lidless eyes unwinking from their midst. Above two smaller lights, closer together, showed dimly the towering height of the flying bridge, and the spectral figure of the officer on watch pacing steadily backwards and forwards across them. A faint glare at intervals shot up to the sky from the great funnel behind. Over the side we could hear the angry gurgling of unseen waters. We were like a ghost ship upon an unknown sea.

Something like this I said to the mate.

"Alone?" he said phlegmatically. "Not we! Look there!"

He pointed out to starboard; and there far out we saw a clear white light, with another behind it; whilst low down, appearing and disappearing at intervals between them, was a third light, dull red. It was the mast-head and port lights of a ship making the same course as ourselves.

I reported to the "Old Man" and turned in again.

In the night we passed Algiers. In the morning I found my patient much better. During the round that day I made up my mind there was something the matter with the Chinese cook. Had I breathed my suspicion to the "Old Man," he would have ordered him up for inspection; but that was exactly what I did not want. Instead, I asked the Chief's advice. He was, in a way, the guardian of the Chinamen, and felt responsible for them.

"No," he said, "you're quite right. I think I understand Chinks. They have very little faith in European doctors; but they try every new ship's doctor at least once. If he happens to cure his first case, then the word goes round, 'This doctolh belong good pidgin'; and every one will come to him with any ailment he has. If he fails, in their opinion, they'll never come near him again, but will wait till we strike some Chinese port, and bundle off to one of their own men. They've got lots of queer stuff of their own in the

fo'castle to dose themselves with, and of course there's always opium."

"I see," I said.

Strolling for'ard again, I was captured by the "Old Man." For some days previously we had been taking a two-mile walk together, measured as so many turns on the saloon deck. His idea was to reduce his weight, mine to get some exercise. But I had cooled off. He rolled so in his walk that we constantly impinged, a fact of which he was blissfully unconscious, being sixteen stone, and having the elasticity of an india-rubber man. I, on the contrary, was battered. It was an unfair contest. I began to make excuses. For a stout man he was unnaturally active; so during our walk I explained to him, between the collisions, that it was not exercise he wanted to reduce his weight—he took enough of that—but dieting. Accordingly I put him on a regimen that very day; and at "tiffin" he ate only about enough for two men. The mate was mildly sarcastic about it all. The Chief, on the other hand, was somewhat troubled, because the "Old Man" stated that he would be the lighter of the two before we reached Pinang. To start fair we rigged up a bo'sun's chair on deck, had ourselves weighed, and I was appointed official "keeper of the records." The Chief affected disbelief in dieting, and gave it as his opinion that "Antadipose" was the stuff.

On the morning of the twelfth day we sighted Port Said. First came a lighthouse, and then some low-lying land.

"That's Damietta," said the Chief.

Then the land disappeared, as though it had been a mirage; and there was nothing but sea and horizon again, till quite suddenly another lighthouse flashed up. "That's it," said the Chief.

Straining our eyes in the dim morning light we saw the Pharos, and surrounding it the dim irregular outline of low-lying houses. Picking up the pilot, we slowly approached, steaming in past the breakwater and the great statue of Lesseps, pointing with outstretched arm to the canal his genius had made possible. It might have been the Port of London. But no—suddenly we came on a scene the East alone could have evolved. It was a P. & O. coaling. Around the queenly long dark hull, with its lines on lines of portholes punched out, as it were, and strung like pearls along the sides, clustered irregular rows of squat and grimy low-lying lighters; and up and down the improvised gangways from them to the ship, and back again, an ant-like stream of basket-carrying figures, dark brown, grimy, turbanned, petticoated, barefooted, swarmed endlessly, whilst all the time a murmuring shout ran with them. At the top of one of the gangways a tall white-robed figure stood reciting, in a loud monotone, verses from the Koran. It was this the swarming hive took up, and shouted as they ran—"La ilaha ill' Allah Mohammedu rasul Allah."

Slowly we moved past, and presently a steam launch, flying the "Crescent and Star," with a crew in tall red tarbushes, came towards us. The crew gesticulated wildly, and shouted "Docteur! Docteur!" With true

British phlegm no one took any notice. The gesticulations then grew more and more frantic; they drew alongside, and hooked eagerly on to the gangway. Then from the cabin of the launch a little Frenchman, swathed to the eyes in a huge overcoat, tripped aboard us, looking very cold and miserable in the raw morning. He was vastly polite, got our "Bill of Health," bowed profusely, tripped down to his launch again, and steamed away. Down came the yellow flag from the foremast; and immediately on that signal a number of motionless bumboats pulled vigorously towards us. From every side they came—men in turbans, tarbushes, fezes, wide-trousered, long-coated, lean, brown-faced, brown-eyed, oily rascals, rowed by piratical-looking boatmen. They scurried up the gangway with their bundles, and fell on us, particularly me. They knew I was the doctor at once, my air of "never-having-been-there-before" giving me completely away. They wanted to sell me cigarettes, post-cards, Maltese lace, ostrich feathers, Florida water, Turkish delight. They wanted to cut my hair, mend my boots, guide me ashore, do anything or everything for me. They followed me round the deck. There was no peace from them.

"Say that Jock Ferguson is looking after you," said the Chief.

I did so.

It acted like a charm. They melted away. It was like the magic faery word that calmed the demons of the underworld.

"Who is Jock Ferguson?" I inquired.

"Ask me another," said the Chief. "Nobody knows who Jock Ferguson is. They're all Jock Ferguson. That fellow over there, talking to the chief steward, is the particular rascal I know as Jock. I don't believe there's any such person."

Certainly nothing more unlike the name could have been presented in the man. He was a tall, thin, coppery fellow, with exceedingly black eyes. He wore a fez with a turban round it, a long grey overcoat, wide trousers, and exceedingly long French boots.

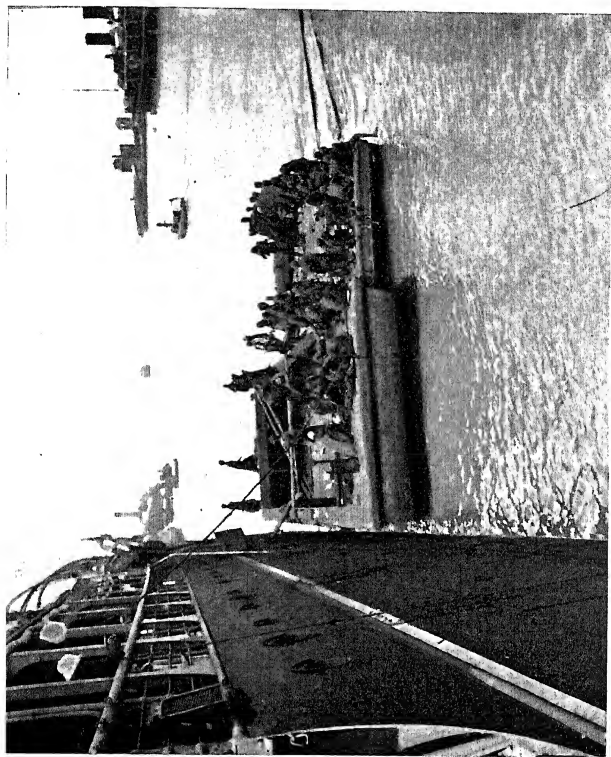
"He's the most polished rogue I know. He cheats me every time I come here; and still I get everything I want from him. I owe him money now; and yet he will never ask me for it. He is an artist. You talk to him," said the Chief.

I did. He had a fluent command of both French and English. He told me in broad Scotch that he came "frae Pitlochry." He also got a prescription out of me for a cold in the head, from which he was suffering. I bought two porous water-bottles (chatties) from him, for use in the Indian Ocean. One of them was cracked and useless, I discovered, when I had reason to use it. He insisted on presenting me with a box of cigarettes. Subsequently I found I had bought 500 from him, though I do not care for Egyptians. I suppose he hypnotised me into buying them.

"Going ashore, Doc.?" said the mate.

"Think so. How long have we?"

"Eight hours," he answered. "We've got to take in a thousand tons of coal, and we have six hundred tons of cotton alongside for Kobe."



COALING AT PORT SAID.

[Facing page 36.]

"Any one coming with me?" I inquired.

No one could. Every one was busy. Jock Ferguson promptly offered me a guide; and presently I found myself in a boat rowed by a picturesque old ruffian in a patched blue coat, wide blue trousers, bare legs and feet. Round his hoary old head he had wrapped what looked like the remnants of a Paisley shawl. My guide, who was very proud of his English, was somewhat more respectable. He wore a red knotted muffler round his fez, petticoats, and elastic-sided boots.

On shore I was guided past the Sudanese sentry—a most dignified black person in khaki marching to and fro with fixed bayonet—into the main street. Here my dragoman, who had a vituperative acquaintance with similarly clad persons, rescued me from several who wished to press their acquaintance and wares on my notice. He wanted, evidently, to do all the cheating for his master, and, if he could, for himself.

The shops were filled with the usual tourist rubbish. They all looked like pawnbrokers' places. Everywhere the notices were in French, the official language of Egypt. The guide hailed a carriage for me. It looked as if it had previously been used as a hen-roost. The horses were mules, the harness an intricate mass of strings and knots. The guide informed it was the end of the "Ramadan"—a month of fasting enjoined on all Mohammedans—and that every one was holidaying in consequence. He advised going to see the Arab fair. This was on the sands, past the new mosque, against the outer wall of which one decrepit old gentle-

man was squatting darning his trousers, taken off for the purpose, and several others were lying apparently asleep. Presently we came on the fair. There were boat-swings and roundabouts, and a circus tent from which came the sounds of frequent pistol firing, and much shouting. It might have been an English village green on a Bank Holiday save for the boys in bright new tarbushes, and sloe-eyed little girls very conscious of their new muslin frocks and the flowers in their carefully braided long, black hair, who ran about, rode on the roundabouts, and hung around the stalls of the sweetmeat vendors. Sugar-cane cut into lengths of about a foot seemed to be especially appreciated by the boys, who each chewed his piece as he scampered now ahead, now behind, his father. The little girls walked sedately alongside their parents nibbling Turkish delight.

From the fair we drove to the native quarter, a place of narrow streets, dilapidated lath-and-plaster buildings, teeming with multitudinous life, small native shops, laundries, and little open cafés, where grave old men sat cross-legged playing chess and smoking interminable cigarettes. Most of the women seen about were old and wrinkled. They wore the veil in a negligent manner—it was no longer necessary to hide their beauties from the eyes of men. Once a young woman passed in the disfiguring yashmak, with its ugly brass cylinder over the nose and forehead. Girls in plenty were running around; but this was the only young woman seen. It is this scarcity of female charm that strikes the European so much at first, used as he

is to the crowds of idle women gaping in the shop windows and blocking up the thoroughfares in the regions where cheap "sales" (so called with sardonic humour) abound. From these narrow streets we came to a part where the houses looked mysterious, and the streets were curiously empty. It was the middle of the afternoon; and the place seemed buried in Sabbathical gloom. All the houses were alike, square, flat-sided, pierced by monotonous rows of windows, heavily guarded by strong Venetian shutters, each storey having its own verandah.

Suddenly, as we drew near one house, the strains of music came echoing into the empty sandy street. As if at a signal the decrepit chariot stood still, my guide got down, and suggested I should go in.

I thought rapidly, and then followed him. It was queer, and I wanted to know. He led the way upstairs into a large room where several men were playing "roulette." No one took any notice of me; but apparently the bank were having a very bad time of it. Every one was winning. The music from the automatic piano was deafening. I looked on silently for some time, and then made a move for the door. An oily-looking Greek intercepted me.

"Won't you try your luck?" he said.

"I'm not drunk enough," I answered.

He shrugged his shoulders, and I passed out. On the stairs I paused, and then stole quietly back. The music had ceased; and all the confederates who had been playing so feverishly, and winning so much, had

ceased also, and were preparing to resume the *sicsta* my advent had so fruitlessly interrupted.

The guide seemed disappointed. He climbed up slowly to the box beside the driver again, and we ambled on. Turning a corner, a woman's low laugh came soft and clear in the stillness of the sandy street; a face appeared for a moment on the verandah; and then there was a discreet cough.

Automatically the driver stopped. The guide turned round inquiringly; but I looked straight ahead. He said something, probably not complimentary; and the rickety old carriage with its two skinny mules ambled on again.

There are ugly stories about Port Said—it has an unsavoury reputation; stories of men winning large sums at the gambling hells and then mysteriously disappearing—the desert sand is a convenient place for the disposal of dead bodies; stories of drunken sailors supposed to be drowned on the way to their ships; stories of innocent English girls, eager to buy curios, setting out under the guidance of such a rascal as I had, and never appearing again—the secrets of the harem are well kept. Probably most of these stories are apocryphal.

All day long we had been loading cotton for Japan. The coolies were very slow at it. It was the day of rejoicing after the fast; and extra inducements had had to be held out to them to make them work. It

was also very cold and raw; and Egyptian coolies do not love the cold. Consequently, it was late in the afternoon before it was all stowed.

Then we started coaling. Coaling is a nightmare. Plug your ventilators, fasten the doors of your cabin, screw up your ports hermetically, and yet the coal-dust gets in.

It came alongside in lighters; and from each boat two big heavy planks were raised to the bunker doors. Up one of these planks the half-naked coolies ran, each with his basket full of coal, after dumping which he ran down the other plank to the lighter again. We, too, had a long-robed patriarch chanting verses from the Koran. It seems the men work quicker under the inspiration of the chant, and the coaling company keeps a special reciter constantly employed. But the row is something indescribable. Night fell, and still the coaling went on. The lights from the cafés on shore came in long rippling streaks across the water; and through the windows could be seen figures passing and repassing. Sometimes the sound of music, too, would come—but very rarely, for the din of the coolies seemed to increase as the coal in the lighters sank lower and lower. Huge cressets burning on the lighters cast a lurid glare over the grimy perspiring figures. It was like a scene out of the *Inferno*. They seemed to be working faster and faster; the voice of the chanter rose wilder and wilder; the coal in the lighters sank lower and lower. There was a sudden last shout, a sound of hurrying feet, every one rushed to leave the ship, the planks were withdrawn, ropes cast

loose, the empty lighters with their burning flares drifted into the night and all was still.

Coaling was over. The Chief passed me, negroid with dust, where he had been measuring. I went on deck again. We looked like a Newcastle tramp. Grimy black hands had left their mark all over the spotless white paint of the deck-houses. The mate was snorting round, cursing softly to himself.

The stillness after the din was wonderful. Near the canal mouth a big German mail-boat, which had been coaling all day, had hoisted three lights on her foremast. That was the signal for the pilot to come aboard. Her three great decks were all aglow with serried rows of lights; and as she slipped silently past us, her great searchlight throwing a blinding glare in front, a hose-pipe jerking water over the stern to shake off persistent bumboats, the music of her band came clear across the water.

"What are we waiting for?" I asked.

Our signal lights had been up some time, the pilot had come aboard, the electrician had got his searchlight going. The pilot explained that there were two mail-boats and a troopship just coming out of the Canal, and we could not start until they passed.

Presently the "stand by" rang; the great searchlight in the bow burned bright; the ship seemed to wake up suddenly; and in another minute we were moving into night in the canal.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIAN OCEAN

MIDNIGHT in the Canal is a sensation. There is an air of ghostly unreality about it. No sound is heard except the sizzling of the enormous searchlight hung over the bow close down near the water. Everything is dark save in the region of the cone of light. There is nothing to see but a narrow strip of illuminated water, fluorescent green, bounded on either side by unlimited dun-coloured sand. The ship crawls on, raising scarce a ripple, following the line of buoys as they appear in the area of light, one after another endlessly in an interminable shadowy chain, making one count, owing to the absence of other objects, till sheer futility kills by inanition. I watched it all as in a dream when suddenly a hoarse voice came from the bridge:

“All hands on deck. Make fast.”

The telegraph rang clearly from the depths of the engine-room; and figures appeared in the darkness, fore and aft. The native boatmen rowed silently ashore, and made us fast to posts on the left bank. A bright light like a star, low down, appeared far in front of us, grew steadily larger, and at last showed as the searchlight of an approaching vessel, which itself looked like a gigantic glowworm in the faint halo rising from its dim-lit ports. There was not room for

us both to keep our course; so we had had to tie up. It was a troopship homeward bound; and she passed so close that we could see the men through the open ports playing cards in the ease of unbuttoned tunics.

After that the course was clear, and we proceeded uninterrupted through the silent night.

In the morning I woke to find the sunlight streaming through my ports. It was a glorious day. The light air from the desert gave one a peculiar feeling of buoyancy. The land itself seemed forgotten of man—nothing but sand, far as the eye could reach—sand in ridges, sand in little flat plains, sand in hummocks, and miniature mountains, with here and there a few solitary scrub acacias, adding, if possible, to the desolation.

Every now and then we would pass a big slate-coloured canal dredger, with its long arm erect, and its native crew lolling about, regardless of the inevitable Greek skipper.

Sometimes a little fussy "C.S." tug-boat would steam cheekily past us at full speed, the native crew one wide-mouthed grin at us as we crawled painfully along at five miles an hour.

Suddenly we came on an Arab encampment on the edge of the Canal. Some dozen camels were kneeling, groaning audibly under the weight of their burdens, in the foreground; further back were four ragged tents and one or two white-robed figures; whilst between, more camels, silhouetted against the sky-line, were stringing off, driven by diminutive sturdy turbaned figures with shrill, important voices. One imp saw me

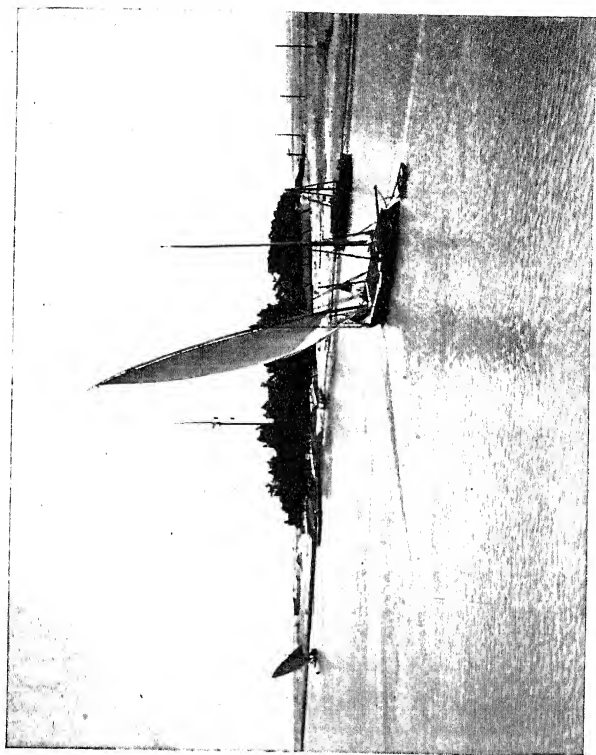


Photo: Dr. Shipway.

DAHABEYAHS IN THE SUEZ CANAL.

[Facing page 44.

preparing to photograph the scene, and posed himself in what he assumed was a dignified position, getting so excited that he fell into the shallow water on the edge of the Canal, from which he was rescued with much laughter by his companions.

In the early forenoon the Canal suddenly widened into a reach of shallow water; and trees, white roofs and the minaret of a mosque appeared on the right, about a mile away. This was Ismailia; and here we found the German mail-boat just ahead of us.

A steam launch heading across the lake circled round to us, took off our pilot, and gave us a second in his place. It is supposed to be too great a strain for one pilot to bring a ship the whole way through the Canal.

Soon we were off again between the narrow banks, proceeding slowly until we saw a clump of palm-trees, and low-lying houses, in the distance. A little jetty projected into the water; and over head on the flagstaff we could see two black balls suspended.

"That's Deservoir, the last station before the 'Bitter Lakes,' and the message is, 'All is clear,'" said the mate.

As we came opposite we could see the station-master; his wife and daughter, sitting in the verandah under the shade of the palm-trees, dressed in their Sunday best, enjoying the Sabbath calm.

In another minute we had reached a broad expanse of water; the telegraph rang sharply; the ship seemed suddenly to wake; the orders were, "Full speed ahead"; and presently we were dashing across the lake for all we were worth, so that, looking back shortly after-

wards, the station was a mere clump of feathery palm-trees on the horizon, with the white triangular sails of two "dahabeeyahs" rising one on either side, a framework for the picture, against an azure sky fading to an opalescent green as it touched the desert sand beyond the edge of the horizon. All around was a flatness of water. It was an hour's run across the lakes.

"We should make Port Tewfik at four o'clock," said the skipper.

Accordingly every one retired after "tiffin" to finish up his mail; and so things became distinctly ruffled when the unexpected order came: "Turn out. Make fast."

"Dash it all! We're only four miles from Suez," said the mate. There was a Canal station about a hundred yards ahead; "Madame" was its name.

"Just like a woman to do the unexpected," said the Chief. It was some consolation, however, to find that the German mail-boat was also held up.

"Half an hour," said the mate.

An hour passed. "Soon now," said every one. Another hour passed. "Deuced odd," was the general comment. Another hour fled. There was nothing to do except stare at the mail-boat ahead. She was decorated with flags in honour of some German Royalty's birthday; and to while away the time the band discoursed sweet music of the "Fatherland."

Drowsily the afternoon wore slowly on. A man came leisurely along the Canal bank and talked to our French pilot. Then we learnt that a lighter, loaded with stone had most inconsiderately sunk in the middle

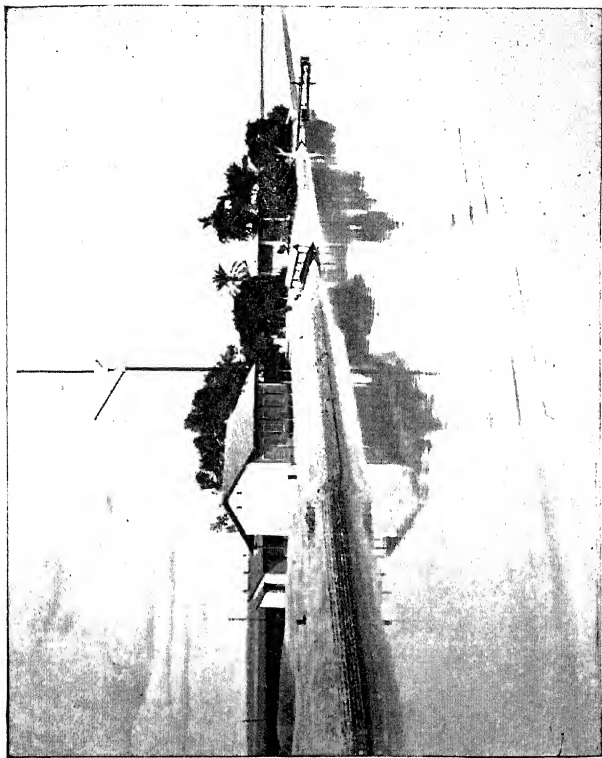


Photo: Dr. Shipway.

A STATION IN THE SUEZ CANAL.

of the channel, and it would be impossible to pass her till the tide rose.

"If England were at war and I were an enemy, the first thing I'd do would be to block the Canal," said the Chief. "It's as easy as falling off a log."

We paced slowly up and down the deck. Above us was a sky of luminous turquoise stretching in one huge vaulting arch from pole to pole of the horizon. On either side the hot and yellow sands, making the air vibrate above, tremulous in hazy, blurred outlines, stretched to the uttermost limits of vision, cleft only by the long green opalescent ribbon of the Canal. Surrounding us was an infinite quiet. Even the German orchestra had been abashed to silence by a feeling of the presence of the spirit of the Infinite—or perhaps because the music had run out. The Chief and I, too somnolent to walk any more, drowsily discussed the two hypotheses, lying in our deck-chairs, our feet high over our heads on the taffrail. But even when we laughed, we laughed softly, for the feeling of immensity was over us, and we could intuitively understand how, nurtured in such great vastnesses, the Semitic mind had risen above the futile polytheism of the Greeks, and evolved the grand conception of a vast, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God, with its necessary corollary, "There is no God but God."

On the fo'castle head the Arab boatmen, dressed in gaberdines of faded blue, brown-faced, white-toothed, with brilliant orange turbans, squatted round a hookah in somnolent content, waiting with the infinite patience

of the East till it was the will of Allah that we should proceed further.

By this time the swift kaleidoscope of sunset was imminent. Above the blue was still of an intensity; but towards the west it faded to the green of sea-encircling caverns lit by a morning sun along a chalk-cliff coast. Wisps of long-drawn cloudlets sailed slowly, rose-pink in the middle heights; whilst on the ruddy path between us and the sinking sun the sands glowed golden, rose, and jasper, and the ribbon of the Canal became a dimpled bronze. Slowly the Turneresque effect rose to a climax, until the sinking sun touched the rim of the horizon, sank rapidly, and disappeared; and then, as if at the touch of a wand, the gold, the rose, the blue, the green, melted to all the shades of grey, a little breeze sprang up from nowhere, and the soft mantle of night swept in layer after layer across the sky.

Over the sands the lights of Suez now twinkled in the darkness; and then quite suddenly, as if that had been the signal, order came to get under weigh again. Every one sighed with relief; and the great ship once more vibrated with the tremor of the throttled engines. Again the searchlight sizzled in the bow, and we were slowly moving on between the half-seen banks in the darkness.

Presently the channel widened, trees appeared dimly on the right bank, verandahed houses with twinkling lights loomed up amid the trees, the Canal suddenly ended, and we were in the open sea. This was Port Tewfik, named in honour of a late Khedive. Slowly we forged ahead into the bay, till the lights of Suez

streamed across the water to us. Then a launch appeared, mysterious, moth-like, from nowhere, and bore off our pilot.

A voice rose in the darkness in a singing monotone :
"By the mark, seven."

It was the quartermaster heaving the lead. A sharp order came from the bridge :

"Let go."

There was a rattle of chains, and the great bow anchor splashed down into the bay. The electrician shut off his searchlight and disconnected his dynamo. We had finished with the Canal. Some one hailed us in the darkness; and another little launch appeared moth-like in the circle of our lights from nowhere. The gangway was rapidly let down, for this was the "agent" coming aboard, bringing our mails and the final sailing orders for the outward voyage. Out in the bay the lights of two big liners, homeward bound, rippled over to us. One had her searchlight ready, preparatory to entering the Canal. Aloft she carried the red light which showed she had His Majesty's mails aboard. The other had a row of four white lights at her foremast head; and with these she was winking in Morse code to the shore. A Black Sea tramp steamer stole past us quietly in the night. A little tug-boat puffed away officiously with the electrician and his gear. The "Old Man" came out of his cabin with the agent, who had our homeward letters in his portfolio. Two ghost-like figures, they said good-bye at the gangway head in the half darkness.

Then "Pleasant voyage," came a voice half-way down the gangway.

"Thank you," said the "Old Man," leaning over the rail.

"Good-bye."

"We'll be off in five minutes now," said the Chief. "This is the original spot—'East of Suez'—where the Ten Commandments stop. We'll be opposite Mount Sinai, where they were made, when you get up tomorrow morning, Doc."

The "Old Man," turning to go on the bridge, heard the remark.

"Humph!" he said. "They cease at Dover, Doc." The "Old Man" is one of those who consider Heaven is a British possession and ought to be coloured "red" on the map. The official language there, too, is English.

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Next morning we were steaming steadily between the peninsula and the Egyptian coast. The land was rugged and mountainous on either side. It teemed with legendary sites of the Mosaic pilgrimage—the Well of Moses, the place of crossing of the children of Israel, the hoary head of Sinai rising from the clouds. Looking at the inhospitable land, one did not wonder that they longed for the "flesh-pots of Egypt." After breakfast No. 1 came to my cabin. He stood rigidly in front of me, his yellow old wrinkled face like a graven image.

"What thing?" I said.

"One man makee sick. No can," he answered solemnly.

"All right. Bring him along."

It was my first Chinese patient; and he had put on his dress of ceremony for me—pigtail free and carefully braided, loose black jacket and trousers, black shoes with thick white soles. His name was "Cheong-wa." Taking him down to my surgery, I found he had a ragged ulcer on his breast-bone about the size of a two-shilling piece. They had been treating this by knuckling it all over, a kind of Chinese massage. As a consequence it was very much inflamed. Under treatment, however, it was nearly well in three days, and my reputation was made. I belonged "good pidgin."

Next morning I looked at the thermometer as soon as I was awake. It registered eighty-five in my cabin. The order therefore had come to don white uniform; portholes were unscrewed, ventilators carefully set to the wind, and from somewhere my steward unearthed a wind-chute for my after-port. On deck the awnings had been put up, and a row of deck-chairs arranged close to the companion hatch. Everywhere preparations were being made for the hot weather. It felt like the middle of summer at home. Looking at the calendar, it was difficult to believe it was the first week in February.

"This is the weather we sign on for. How do you like it, Doc.?" said the second mate.

"I'm beginning to feel really happy," I answered.

"You're getting the best of it," he said. "This is

winter in the Red Sea. Next voyage it will be stifling here."

"Have you left a hole in the awnings for the Doc. to get sunburnt through?" the Chief inquired gravely of the mate. "Nobody'll believe his yarns when he gets home, unless he's burnt a bit."

The mate smiled sleepily. Both of us felt too comfortable to reply.

Picture to yourself three long white figures, stretched in deck-chairs, heels planted high above their heads on the rail, lazily watching the horizon move slowly up and down between the bars as the ship rolled in the calm sea, too lazy to speak, too lazy almost to smoke, with no one to worry them, nothing to do, conscious that all the time, in the little island at home, people were plashing through the rain and mud, shivering over half-dead fires, struggling with one another in the mad rush for gold, backbiting, slandering, marrying, dying—ough!

I had a copy of *The Times*. It came aboard at Port Tewfik, and was already ten days old. Politics—the attitude of Germany, Protection, Free Trade—what did it matter? Nothing. The sea somehow has a wonderful power of correcting one's mental perspective. On land the immediate environment bulks so largely that man does not feel his littleness. At sea the fallacy of the near does not operate, one is just a point in immensity, and other things fall into correct proportion.

Our climate makes for a restless energy. We have to fight with the elements, with the soil, with one an-

other, to make existence possible. We are aggressive in consequence by heredity; we carry our aggressive spirit abroad with us; and the non-aggressive nations succumb before us. We do not stop to think whether it is of any benefit to ourselves or others. Action for action's sake has got into our blood; we cannot help ourselves; we must be doing something. As a rule we do not recognise that this "ergophilia" is a disease. We even boast of it as one of our special virtues, and talk of the races who have it not as "decadent."

It is only when one gets dislocated from one's environment that one appreciates the other view—the view of a man on a camel in the desert, looking at the illimitable sand, knowing the simoom may come at any moment, knowing that no effort of his will eke out the supply of water, and no device augment the endurance of the camel, on which his life depends. It is natural he should be fatalistic, just as the sailor on the high seas is fatalistic. It is contact with the elemental things, the feeling of the powers of the unseen, the helplessness of individual effort, that induces it. When the mate left us to struggle with the "bills of lading," I fired off these musings on the Chief.

"It's the heat," he said sympathetically. "Have another iced lager."

"Base materialist!" I answered. "It's my shout."

Next morning, after inspection, we had our second weighing. The "Old Man" had gone down eight pounds; the Chief was up two; the rest were about the same. The "Old Man" was highly delighted. There

was only a difference of ten pounds between him and the Chief.

"I'll get below him before we reach Pinang," he repeated.

The Chief smiled faintly.

"He'll get tired of it presently," he said. "I've seen him at this game before. Let's go and watch for 'flying fish.' Bet you a bottle of lager I see more between now and 'tiffin' than you do."

He did. In fact, I couldn't see them at all. A hot wind was blowing off the Nubian desert; the sea was a grey mass of lumpy wavelets; the fish were not flying high; and so my unaccustomed eye could not yet make them out.

I professed a healthy scepticism as to their presence which exercised the Chief to much pointing. The mate, with twinkling eyes, professed, too, not to be able to see them. Finally the Chief proclaimed us conspirators in a base plot to keep him thirsty. He had his revenge that evening. We three were sitting in the mate's cabin playing dummy bridge, with the ports wide open. Since dinner-time the wind had risen steadily. The mate had just said: "I leave it to dummy", and I was looking at my cards, when I heard a curious smacking noise. Something wet and slimy had struck the mate on the face. It fell wriggling on the card table. The mate drew his hand in a startled manner over his cheek.

"Well, I'm ——. It's a flying fish," he said.

"It's a special intervention of Providence to demonstrate you owe those drinks," said the Chief solemnly.

You will have guessed he was a Presbyterian Irishman—no one else could have been capable of such a remark, made in all seriousness. Undoubtedly the argument was with him.

Later, when we went on deck for a cool down before turning in, we found that quite a number had been blown on board. The Chinamen had collected half a bucketful, and were going to make a feast of them in the middle watch. In appearance they were like small herring, with the lateral fin very much elongated.

"Let's sit an hour before turning in," said the Chief.

The tropical night at sea is something to be felt rather than described. It is dark—inky dark, and yet not with the unfriendly dark of Northern climes, but with an air of warm encirclingness as of some one, unseen, beloved, bending over one. The ship is a region of dim shadows, faintly seen, pale lights casting hazy cones of brightness, multitudinous sounds—here, there, everywhere, indefinite, small—blending with the all-pervading monotone of the screw.

Far out at sea a sudden point of light appears, flickers, and goes out. That is an Arab dhow. The captain has seen our mast-head lights, and the long row of port-holes, shining like dragon scales along the water-line and he responds by burning a "flare," to show us where he is so that we may not run him down in the darkness. He never carries lights. Why should he? When his forefathers brought the Queen of Sheba to see King Solomon in all his glory, they carried no lights; and what was good enough for them is good enough for him. All round the ship a wave of

phosphorescence runs from stern to stern, composed of myriads on myriads of flying points of flame, rushing past, countless as the sands upon the seashore, some as large as five-shilling pieces, others mere specks of light. They are the souls of those who have died at sea on their way to the grave of the "Prophet." All good Mohammedans pray for their repose; and we—why should we doubt that it serves? On such a night as this one can believe anything. There are times when one's antipathy to facts amounts to positive hostility. Such a night was this. The wind was flapping the awnings audibly in the darkness overhead; but it was a wind from off the desert, and one could have dressed as Adam and yet been comfortable. I lay back, to somnolent to move. A creaking indicated that the faint area of whiteness that represented the Chief had shifted in his chair. Then the light of a match illuminated his face, tanned by many years of sun and wind and sea. Without a word he, too, sank back in his chair again. We had got past the stage when speech was necessary.

Suddenly from overhead a bell clanged—one—two—three—four—five. There was a pause; and then from the fo'castle head the signal was repeated, and the voice of the look-out came mournfully:

"All's well. Lights burning brightly."

The Chief's chair creaked again. He had got up.

"Come on, Doc.," he said. "Mustn't go to sleep here. The night dews are very heavy in spite of the awnings."

At "tiffin" the next day the third mate came down

to report "two small islands ten points to port."

"Keep her there, Mr. Mathews," said the "Old Man," reaching out for another chop.

"Yes," he said, continuing the conversation, "every man ought to get married. I was engaged fourteen times myself."

"How often?" I said in surprise.

"Fourteen times," he repeated sturdily. "Got engaged mostly after every voyage when I got home; and found out something against them next time I got back. One girl I was particularly fond of was away at a race-meeting with a man I disliked when I arrived unexpectedly home. She cried like anything when I told her she would not do for a sailor's wife. An old sailor can't be happy at sea if he thinks his wife is gallivanting about with other men ashore. I took the ring off her finger. It's thirty years ago; an' she's a widow now; but she still sends me a Christmas card every year. I remember as if it was yesterday taking that ring off her."

"What did you do with it?" said the Chief.

"Dropped it overboard—dropped them all overboard except one. Couldn't give another girl a second-hand ring—could I?"

"Certainly not. But what about the one?" I said.

"Oh! that was when I was mate of the *Cyclops*. Old Mac—you remember old Mac?" turning to the Chief. The Chief nodded.

"Well, old Mac was 'chief' of the *Cyclops* that voyage. I was just going to pitch the ring out of the port when he came into my cabin. 'What's that you've

got?' he said. I was a bit sore at the time, and I said shortly, 'Engagement ring. Girl no good. I was just going to pitch it overboard when you came in.' 'How much did it cost?' said Mac cautiously. I told him. 'I'll give you four pounds for it,' he said. Well, I thought I might as well have the money; so I let him have it. When he'd got it he didn't know what to do with it. He was a careful old fellow, and did not like the idea of wasting it. So he married a woman it fitted; and, do you know, the marriage turned out splendidly, though it was only because he had the ring the notion ever came into his head."

Later in the day we passed close to Mocha, of coffee fame. I was on the bridge with the "Old Man" at the time.

"Last voyage we called here," he said, "and the little Turkish doctor presented me with some of the precious stuff. I've got some of it left. We'll sample it after dinner."

The steward made it as the doctor had shown him last voyage. It was thick, treacly stuff, very black, very strong.

"There's more Mocha drunk every year in England alone than is exported from Mocha in two years, the Consul told me. Which thing is a mystery," said the "Old Man."

"If we take as much as is produced, where does the rest of the world get theirs from?" I said.

"That is a secret which will only be revealed at the Last Day," the "Old Man" answered solemnly.

"Would you like to be called as we're passing Perim about midnight?" he said, as I was leaving.

I nodded; and so at "one bell" (11-45 p.m.) the quartermaster came to call me. Though it was blowing half a gale, the wind was so hot that even in thin pyjamas one felt quite comfortable. I climbed to the flying bridge, where I found the "Old Man" similarly clad, standing with the Second Officer, gazing at a low-lying island, seen dimly in the moonlight, with about a dozen lights dotted over it.

The "Old Man" turned. "See those two lights, Doc.? Well when we get them in line we're opposite the harbour entrance. Then we'll signal."

I watched in silence the lights grow closer and closer together as we swept onwards. All was very quiet. Suddenly—so suddenly I jumped—the quartermaster started to strike "eight bells."

By now the lights had almost met. "Ready, Mr. Horner?" said the "Old Man" sharply.

"Yes, sir," answered the Second Officer; and the two lights fused.

"Dead on. Light up," exclaimed the "Old Man"; and as he spoke, Horner, standing to the starboard side of the bridge, struck a fusee, applied it rapidly to the rocket-signal fastened ready, and immediately afterwards the whole ship was flooded with a bright blue glare. Then slowly, one by one, six blue balls of flame shot up into the night, exploded, and went out. Then all was dark again.

"Watch for the answer. There it is," said the "Old Man."

A glimmer had started on the highest point of the island. It grew brighter, and then suddenly burst into a red glare, flared a moment, and was gone.

"That's all," said the "Old Man." "My wife will know to-morrow that we've passed Perim safely. We've been married eighteen years; and she worries still. I cable her from every port."

Every sailor is a sentimentalist when women are concerned. He looks upon them as something too fragile and precious for this rough-and-tumble world, something to be guarded and protected from anything that would ruffle their rosy-tinted views of life. He sees so little of them, when he is on shore, that in the long night watches, with only the stars for company, he weaves haloes of imagination around the very name of woman till every petticoat becomes a "Venus-Madonna."

"There are no bad women," the "Old Man" once said to me. "When you hear of one, it always means some man's doing."

"Did I ever tell you how we came to take Perim?" he said, as we went down to the deck below to have a look at the charts.

"It was a very smart bit of work, and meant a lot for England. When we took possession it was an unknown island. It is now one of the most important coaling stations in the world. It was in the days before the Canal was opened; and it belonged to nobody, or Turkey—I suppose it was Turkey; but she didn't count. Well, at any rate, we had a very wideawake Governor at Aden in those days. The French were building the

Canal; and a couple of French warships, coming round the Cape, put into Aden for coal. The Governor was very polite to them, did everything he could to make their stay pleasant. There was a big dinner, to which all the officers were invited, and a dance afterwards. Nobody asked them where they were bound; but they volunteered the information that it was Cochin China. The wine flowed freely; every one had a good time; and they did not weigh anchor till late in the morning. But they weren't going to Cochin China—at least not direct. They turned up at the supposed unoccupied island of Perim, to find, to their surprise, a flagstaff on the highest point of the island flying the Union Jack, and a company of British marines calmly exercising on the shore. That's how we got Perim."

"But how was it done?" I queried.

"Oh, a woman! One of the young French officers confided to a girl at the dance. She told the Governor's aide-de-camp; and so, while the enemy slept, fifty men were hurriedly embarked, and got there six hours in advance."

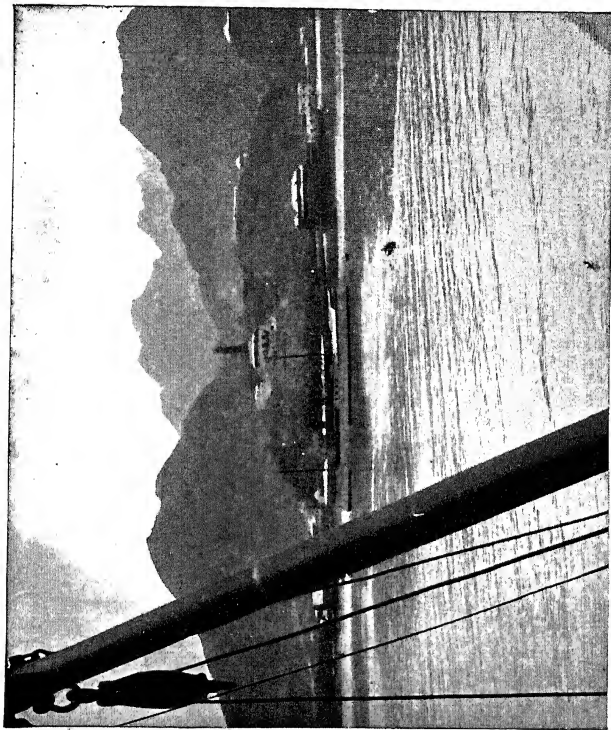
In the morning the blue hills of Aden smiled at us over a sunlit sea. The wind was blowing freshly, for it was the season of the north-east monsoon. We were making for Cape Guardafui, on the Somaliland coast, running down the Gulf of Aden; and all the next day we kept on the same course—an irregular line of blue low-lying hills representing Somaliland. Towards evening, however, the point of Gaurdafui became visible; and at ten o'clock, in the moonlight, we passed

it, crouching like a huge lion, black and silent, guarding the land of Ophir behind. I was up in the chart-room with the "Old Man" at the time.

"We're in the Indian Ocean now," he said, pointing to the chart pinned out before him. "Now we'll alter the course to take us to the south of Sokotra, so as to have the shelter of the land while the north-east monsoon is blowing. We're making next for Point de Galle, in Ceylon."

So for the next week the monotony of the sea fell on us. Land we sometimes saw as an indefinite blue cloud; otherwise there was nothing but the calm, everlasting smile of the Indian Ocean. At first I used to look overboard; but soon I found myself doing so less and less; and then I noticed that the others almost never thought of gazing over the side. The sailor is almost unconscious of the great world of water around him as long as everything is going on all right; just as one becomes unconscious of the furniture in one's rooms when its position is not varied. It is only when some alteration strikes the eye and penetrates to the sensorium, that one becomes alive to the presence of inanimate things. As a consequence, however, of this out-world sameness I noticed I was becoming much more sensitive to the inner life of the ship, the technical details of its fittings, the speech and actions of the crew, the curious idiosyncrasies of the Chinese firemen.

Pidgin English takes some time to learn. There are no "r's" in it. By some phonetic difficulty they become metamorphosed into "l's," and "rice" therefore is changed to "lice."



THE BLUE HILLS OF ADEN.

[Facing page 62.]

China is such a vast, unwieldy country that several languages, or at any rate dialects, exist, so that the uneducated coolies of different provinces cannot understand one another. Pidgin English, which is a corruption for "business English," is therefore used in all the "treaty ports" as a lingua franca; and one of the things that amuses the traveller most in the Far East is to hear two Chinamen of different localities gravely bargaining with one another in a language that irresistibly reminds him of comic opera. Most of our men were Cantonese; but we had one who could speak only his own dialect, and hadn't even any "pidgin." This man happened to get a bad finger; and so the No. 1 hauled him up before me. I tried him in my best "pidgin."

No. 1 shook his head.

"Bolong dam fool," he said, pointing to the man. "No can spik English. Bolong allesame Swatow side."

I ran a sharp bistoury through his finger, and then looked at him keenly. It must have been exquisitely painful; but the mask never moved; the dark twinkling eyes never faltered. He did not utter a sound, or make a single movement.

"All right?" I said when all was over, and the finger dressed.

"All-li," he answered firmly.

"No can go bottom-side two-thlee day," I told the No. 1.

"All-li," said No. 1.

The "Old Man" was still keen on the idea of reducing his weight; so after breakfast on the next day he had all the officers paraded on deck, a bo'sun's chair rigged up, and again every one's weight was solemnly taken down. He was lighter by five pounds; the Chief was still the same; and so there was only five pounds now between them.

The Chief was evidently perturbed, though he tried not to show it.

"You'll have to knock off beer if you don't want to be overhauled," I told him.

"It isn't worth it this hot weather," he answered. "Besides, I know the 'Old Man.' He won't get below me before Pinang, and, once he goes ashore there, dining a single night will set him off again—you'll see."

We spent the morning making deck quoits out of rope, under the directions of the mate. He produced a "fid" for the Chief, and another for me—a "fid" is a sort of wooden marlinspike—and showed me how to push the point between the strands of rope and splice the ends together. The Chief was an expert. After several failures I managed to produce a fairly respectable-looking one. In the meanwhile the Chief had made five others.

"That ought to be enough," he said.

We marked out the "scoring board" in chalk on the deck. It is so arranged that any three areas in line make fifteen. Ten is taken off one's score if the disc falls into the nearest square; and ten is added on for the furthest away. The discs must lie entirely within

the square; and it is part of the opponent's game to try to knock them out when they are favourably placed:

10 off	4	3	8	10 on
	9	5	1	
	2	7	6	

There is a special rule about end scoring that makes the game much more exciting near the finish.

We started playing in the first "Dog," the Chief and I against the Second and Fourth Engineers. The Fourth had a marvellously accurate eye. He seemed to be able to drop his quoit anywhere he liked. They beat us hollow.

The Chief dropped down exhausted in a chair. At that moment the "Old Man" passed us in his pyjamas on the way to his bath, looking like a boiled hippopotamus. He always had two hot baths a day in the Tropics, declaring it was the only way to keep cool. The Chief looked at the huge bulk of his retreating figure, and smiled.

"What is it?" I said.

"I'm thinking if I keep on playing quoits the 'Old Man' won't have the ghost of a chance of getting below me," he said.

The Chief is distinctly wily. I remembered, on thinking back, it was he who first suggested the idea of playing quoits.

I do not think a European ever gets quite accustomed to the rapidity with which day merges into night in the Tropics. At "one bell" (5.45 P.M.) the Chief and I went below to get ready for dinner. At six o'clock it was broad daylight, "four bells" had gone, and the cook was late. We both went up on deck again to watch the sun, hanging like an immense molten red globe just over the horizon. As we watched, it touched the water (we almost fancied we could hear it sizzle) and began slowly to melt into a blood-red sea. When it had sunk half-way a black something, like a dog leaping for a stick, silhouetted itself sharply against the fiery disc behind. It was a dolphin leaping for flying fish. Three minutes later all was gone; the dinner bell rang; and it was still clear daylight. At ten past six it was so dark the stewards had to switch on all the lights in the mess-room. When we went on deck again for an after-dinner smoke it might have been midnight. The stars were out, though the "Southern Cross" had not yet risen over the horizon.

As a constellation the "Cross" is a disappointment at first when one sees it, in the Red Sea, after leaving Suez. But it grows on one; one gets to look out for it like an old friend; one misses it when it's gone; and hails it with delight again when it reappears, as we did steaming south beyond the Philippines.

That evening, some hours later, as on many subsequent nights, we sat, and smoked, and looked at it shining down on us, dreaming the hours away till the clang of "five bells" brought us up regretfully.

"Let's go and see what the Fourth's doing before

you turn in," the Chief said; and we got up slowly, moved cautiously along the dim-lit deck, and found our way down the series of breakneck ladders to the engine-room floor, where the Fourth was walking to and fro keeping his watch, pausing to look now at this, now at that, whilst a silent "greaser," oilcan in hand, crept here and there, in and out, oiling, oiling, oiling all the time.

"We've tried mechanical oilers time and again; but they're no good," said the Chief. "They're a heart-break. Oiling requires intelligence."

The Fourth stood quietly immobile while the Chief was around. He had nothing to say except "Yes, sir," and "No, sir," to any of his questions. The Chief had never seen him, as I had, the centre of a laughing group, springing some quaint conceit or laughing retort on those around.

"Nice steady fellow," he said to me, when we had gone on deck again; and I agreed.

"Bit slow," he added; and I smiled in the darkness, having seen him imitate the Chief's gait and manner to the life that very afternoon.

Ash Wednesday is the Chinaman's New Year; and there was a general air of holiday when we arrived at their fo'castle on inspection. They had had extra rations of pork served out to them, and a present of some live ducks. Consequently every face was one large grin.

"Have you got Samshu?" said the "Old Man."

No. 1's face clouded with regret.

"No have got Samshu," he said.

Samshu is a kind of alcoholic drink beloved of the Chinese. The "Old Man" was in high good-humour.

"All right. Tell Chief Steward can have beer. One man, one pint beer. Savvy."

No. 1 grinned widely. His eyes glistened with anticipation.

"I savvy. All-li," he said.

When we went up on the poop to look at the "Patent Log," a series of concerted yells came out through the ventilators.

"They're driving away the devils we introduced when we entered just now," said the Chief. "Polite, aren't they! Crackers would have been better; but they haven't got any."

Next morning at breakfast the "Old Man" remarked: "We should sight Pulo Wai at ten o'clock to-night. That means you can have your breakfast ashore in Pinang two days hence, Doc."

Then he turned to the Chief.

"I should like a 'Chit' some time this morning, Mr. Halahan, saying how much coal you have."

"Very well, sir. I'll measure the bunkers after inspection."

A few hours later the Chief threw himself down on a deck-chair beside me.

"Ever heard of 'coal fever,' Doc.?"

"It's not in the 'College of Physicians' List," I confessed.

"Dare say! Deuced nasty thing to have, all the same. The 'Old Man' showed signs of it this morning when he asked for that 'Chit.'"

"What's the main symptom?"

"A dread of not having enough coal to bring the ship into port. The ship's company got it badly last voyage. They had cause to. They were carrying pilgrims from Jeddah to Singapore; and the 'tween-decks had had to be kept empty. Consequently they only took what coal they absolutely needed at Port Said. The Chief said he had three days' supply left when the ship was then where she is now. In the 'middle watch' he came to the 'Old Man':

" 'I've miscalculated by fifty tons, sir,' he said.

"They had passed Pulo Wai at the time; and the 'Old Man' was frantic. 'You've what?' he said.

" 'I've miscalculated by fifty tons, sir,' the Chief repeated.

" 'What the devil are we to do?' the 'Old Man' said, marching up and down his cabin in his pyjamas in an agony.

" 'I've shut down one boiler, sir.' The 'Old Man' stopped and stared at him.

" 'Can you make it do?' he shouted. 'If you can't, by God, you're ruined in the company. It's as far back to the coal depôt in Pulo Wai as to Pinang. Man, if we have to be towed in I'll never be able to hold up my head again. How the h—l did you manage it!'

"They went on. I don't envy that Chief. He came up to report that all the coal was in the stoke-hold; and there wasn't a sign of land in sight. The ship was swept of coal—every bit scraped together as if it had been diamonds. They crawled along at four knots.

"‘We’ll have to cut up the derricks,’ the ‘Old Man’ said with a groan.

"But they managed it—how they hardly knew. Steam ran out just as they reached their moorings. There wasn’t enough coal left to start the ‘donkey boiler.’ They had to have some sent from the shore."

"What happened to the Chief?" I said.

"Officially it was announced there was eight tons left. Decent of the ‘Old Man’—wasn’t it?"

That night we sighted Pulo Wai, an island on the north-west point of Sumatra. The "Old Man" by this time had got into the habit of sending for me when anything interesting was about; and, standing with him and the second mate on the bridge, we peered forward into the night.

The second mate had the best eyes of the three.

"There it is, sir," he said suddenly.

The "Old Man" looked. "Yes," he said.

I confessed that I could see nothing.

"We’re forty miles off. It’s a five-second flare every minute," said the "Old Man." "Watch carefully over that second ventilator on the fo’castle head to star-board. Time, Mr. Horner?"

"Ten seconds still, sir."

Presently he snapped his watch. "Now, sir."

It came, a glow far out on the edge of the horizon; then suddenly burst into a bright light like that of a falling star, and as suddenly went out again.

Sixty seconds fled, and again it was repeated.

"That’s all, Doc.," said the "Old Man." "I’ll run

in as close as I can to let you see the Achin coast in the morning."

He was as good as his word. At "seven bells," on the way to my bath, I saw the coast rising wild, rugged, and mountainous all along for miles behind and in front of us, culminating inland in one great peak, the "Golden Chersonese," from which the fabled gold of Ophir is said to have come. It is a wild and rugged land, this Achin—a land of old romance. Once the seat of a mighty empire, its sultans made a treaty with Queen Elizabeth. Under its great leader, "Iskander Muda," it raised an armada of five hundred sail, manned by 60,000 men to fight the Portuguese. It was by the aid of the Achinese the Dutch eventually took Malacca, broke the power of the Portuguese, and established their ascendancy in the Malay Archipelago. That quaintly pious buccaneer, the inimitable Dampier, sailed in a native prau from the Nicobar Islands to Achin, after he had been marooned. He says:

"Being now arrived at Achin again, I think it not amiss to give the reader some short account of what observations I made of that city and country. This kingdom is the largest and best peopled of many small ones that are up and down the isle of Sumatra. . . . There is one hill more remarkable than ordinary, especially to seamen. The English call it the Golden Mount, but whether this name is given it by the natives, or only by the English, I know not. 'Tis near the N.W. end of the island; and Achin stands but five or

six miles from the bottom of it. 'Tis very large at the foot, and runs up smaller towards the head; which is raised so high as to be seen at sea thirty or forty leagues. This was the first land that we saw coming in our proe from the Nicobar Islands. The rest of the land, though of a good height, was then undiscerned by us, so that this mountain appeared like an island in the sea; which was the reason why our Achin Malaysans took it for Pulo Way. . . . But that island, tho' pretty high champion land, was invisible, when this Golden Mount appeared so plain, tho' as far distant as that island."

It was a land of much gold, and great trade, in those days. The ubiquitous Chinaman was then, as now, the great trader in the Far East; and a great fair was held in June every year, lasting two or three months. The laws of the country were very strict. Malefactors were severely punished,—arms and legs were cut off—and they were generally banished to Pulo Wai; so that "on Pulo Way there are none but this sort of cattle; and tho' they all of them want one or both hands, yet they so order matters that they can row very well, and do many things to admiration, whereby they are able to get a livelihood."

But all this is a thing of the past. The glory is departed. No longer have the sultans droves of 900 tame elephants. The hand of the Dutch has fallen heavily on the Achinese. For more than two hundred years they lived at peace under the shadowy protection of England. Thirty years ago that protection was

withdrawn in return for some barren concessions in Ashanti. England gave up all her historic rights in the huge island of Sumatra; and the Dutch immediately picked a quarrel—the quarrel of Naboth. It is probable that in the same position we should have done the same; for truly we cannot afford to cast reflections on the Dutch, since as land-grabbers we are easily supreme. Besides, the Dutch share our genius for governing and colonising, if indeed they do not excel us.

The Dutch have taken two hundred years to spread over Sumatra. They have been fighting the Achinese for thirty years, and have not conquered them yet. They have lost thousands of men through wounds and disease in Achin, these natives proving unexpectedly difficult to “pacify,” the spirit of their ancient fame evidently surviving the decay of their body politic.

Eventually, of course, they will be civilised. At present they have a very uncivilised habit of thinking the Dutch robbers, and treating them in the way their forefathers treated malefactors in the time of Dampfer. When they capture a Dutchman they return him minus nose or a limb; and the Dutch do not like it.

When we were going into Batavia some months later, we passed a troopship bound for Padang, crowded with soldiers to hurry up civilisation. Perhaps you wonder why the Dutch are bothering about it at all. The answer is that there are great quantities of gold and tin and oil in the interior which the Achinese will not let the financiers get at—very childish of them, and very irritating to the financiers. So more and more drafts of fine, big, boyish, Dutch soldiers

are being sent out from Europe to die of fever in the swamps, in order that the financiers may get at the gold more quickly—that is to say, in order that “they may have an opportunity of opening up the resources of the country, and of bringing peace and security of life and property, under the ægis of the Hollander flag, to a country erstwhile torn with internecine strife.” Substitute the Union Jack for the Dutch tricolour, and it is obvious that, if we claimed Sumatra, we would be doing exactly as the Dutch are doing now.

CHAPTER III

PINANG

NEXT morning some one shouted down my ventilator, "Hi, Doc.! Get up! We're in sight of Pinang."

It was about half-past six; and I rushed on deck as I was. This was what I had come 8,000 miles to see, and every moment lost seemed wasted. It was twenty-one days since we had touched solid ground; and my feet ached to be ashore again.

The first impression was of a wonderful green; the land seemed smothered in vegetation. It rose precipitous from the water's edge, crag upon crag of naked rock jutting out grey amongst the green, with here and there the white outlines of verandahed bungalows, perched perilously on the heights, which, half hidden in the verdure, rose higher and higher, and culminated finally in one great peak 2,700 feet above the sea.

Passing Muka Head, a promontory on the extreme north-west end of the island, we swung round a red buoy for Georgetown, running between the island and the mainland. The deep blue of the Indian Ocean had ceased; and the water was a milky-white. The mainland, known as Province Wellesley, once part of the kingdom of Kedah, was a green belt of palm-trees,

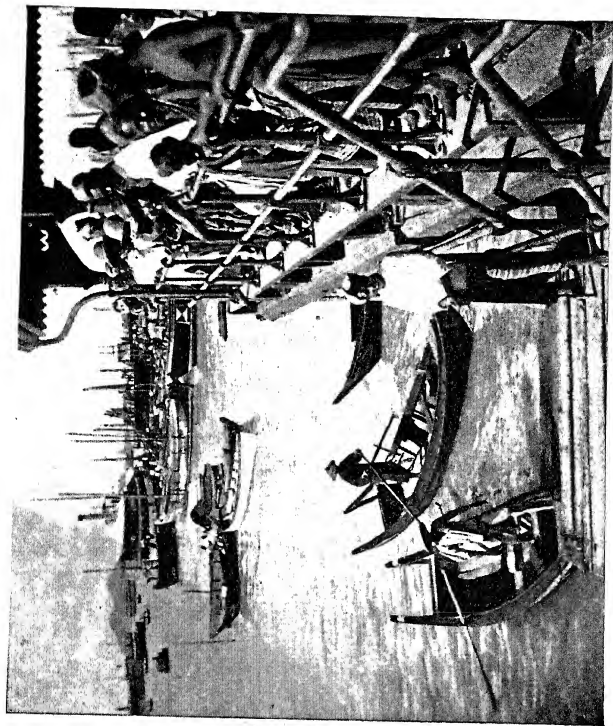
fringing a yellow strand, stretching back to the blue hills behind.

All around us lay crazy-looking fishing praus, with bat-wing palm-leaf sails, brown and yellow, patched to the limit of patchiness, manned by half-naked, copper-coloured Malaysans. Stakes sticking out in the water in rows showed where they hung their nets.

All along the yellow strip of sandy shore on the Pinang side, hidden amongst the green of the palm-trees, the brown thatched atap-roofs of native huts drew one's eye to the houses standing on their bamboo props.

Breakfast over, I watched the panorama spread before me: Rat Island with its column and its solitary Buddhist priest, the undulating outline of Pinang, the dark green of Province Wellesley, and over all the deep blue sky.

We anchored opposite the jetty in thirteen fathoms of water; and the first thing that struck us was that it had suddenly become intensely hot—we were no longer making a breeze for ourselves. The next impression was that we were being boarded by pirates. They came from every side, sampan racing sampan for which would be first to reach the lowered gangway. They tumbled on deck in heaps from every quarter. In five minutes they had penetrated to every corner of the ship—Parsees, Malays, Klings, Chinamen, and Eurasians. There were money-changers with bags, clinking the large silver Straits Settlements dollar, cigar merchants selling Burmah cheroots, tailors wanting to measure one for white suits, men with fruit of



THE LANDING STAGE, PINANG.

[Facing page 76.]

tropical lusciousness, boys with the inevitable picture-postcards.

Almost before the engines had stopped a series of lighters, with great bamboo masts and yards, began to arrange themselves around the ship. Scores of brown, half-naked, turbaned coolies swarmed on board, opened the hatches, and with naked feet on the levers started the steam winches running. In an almost incredibly short period after our arrival cargo was going over the side into the empty lighters, and khaki-clad Chinese tally-clerks in puggarees, standing one at each hatch, were checking the loads as they rose from the hold.

The heat was sweltering. Every one was busy—the officers looking after the cargo, the “Old Man” closeted with the agent, the Chief seeing about the supply of fresh water which was being pumped from lighters into the tanks.

The Chief Steward was going ashore to order fresh provisions; so we took a sampan together. The sampan is the universal boat of the East. It varies slightly in different places; but materially it is a cross between a gondola and a punt. In Pinang it is rowed with two broad sweeps, the rower, or rowers, standing erect facing the direction of progress.

Our man rowed with a powerful swing against the tide, the muscles of his arms and legs rippling underneath the coppery skin like a living bronze statue, his face in deep shadow underneath his sugar-loaf palmetto hat.

He ran us nearly alongside the landing stage, crowded to overflowing with passengers coming and

going, and loungers looking on. A detachment of Sikhs belonging to the "Malay Guides" had landed in front of us. They were forming up on the pier as we got ashore, tall, grave men, eagle-featured, bearded like the pard, very gorgeously Oriental in their uniform, towering head and shoulders over the little Malay troops alongside.

A bronzed English officer at their head uttered a sharp, quick word of command; and like a machine the whole mass moved forward up the pier, like a wedge through a lane of brown and yellow faces.

We followed in their wake. It was with difficulty I could persuade myself that I was not looking on at a theatrical performance—the cosmopolitan crowd composed of every nation in the East appeared so tricked out for effect, the vivid colouring of the Orient smote the eye so insistently. Impressions followed one another so rapidly, that, when I tried to recollect them afterward, my mind was a confused palimpsest of primary colours and grinning Celestials—for the Chinaman is everywhere, he makes up more than half the population, he apparently does nearly all the work, and he evidently has the monopoly of retail trade.

When we got to the bottom of the landing stage we saw two long rows of 'rickishaws, one on either side. The owners of the nearest two leapt across the road, whirled their light vehicles round, and stood grinning till we each mounted. They too were Chinamen. All the 'rickishaw men in the Straits Settlements are Chinese. The Malay is much too lazy to compete with them; nor has he the physical stamina.

My man was dressed in bathing drawers, a sugar-loaf hat, and a broad smile. The calves of his legs and the muscles of his back were an anatomical joy. The other man wore a loose baju jacket as well.

They stood holding the shafts of the 'rickishaws, waiting for directions where to go. I had not yet acquired any knowledge of Malay; so I shouted to the Chief Steward: "You tell them where to go. Anywhere's the same to me." He did so; and we whirled off.

Malay is the lingua franca of the settlements. Every one speaks it—Chinese, British, Dutch, Indian. It is the simplest language in the world to learn, and one of the most beautiful to hear spoken. The Malay has wakened up to find his land taken from him, his country invaded by every nation on earth; he has shrugged his shoulders, and gone to sleep again; but somehow or other he has imposed his language on the conquerors. When a Dutch planter from Sumatra comes over to Pinang on business, if he does not know English, he talks to the English clerks in the offices in Malay; when he trafficks with the wily Chinaman he does the same. The Malay is so lazy his language must be simple. If it were otherwise he wouldn't trouble to speak. There is a "Pukka Malay" used in literature, and in addressing high native dignitaries. It is studied by learned pundits, and spoken in the presence of rajahs; but that does not concern the man in the street—he uses the vernacular.

We sped along wide open streets, lined by Chinese

shops, past patient oxen dragging springless carts, past itinerant merchants carrying their stock-in-trade in large hemispherical baskets, slung, one on either end of a long bamboo pole, over one shoulder, and held by the corresponding arm, whilst the unoccupied hand worked a wooden rattle to attract the attention of possible customers, past big Sikh policemen, who gravely saluted when we paused to look at them, past Chinese temples, dragon-haunted, lantern-hung, along a gaily decorated road, past an open space where little pigtailed Chinese boys were playing football, bare-footed, with the temperature at 95° F. Other 'rickishaws met us, carrying pale-faced Europeans dressed in white, with white pith helmets like ourselves. They all stared at us. Sometimes a passing 'rickishaw would carry a portly Chinese merchant, or a Chinese woman with death-like, white-chalked face and henna'd lips, or little Chinese girls with tinsel crowns and flowers in their hair—for the celebration of the Chinese New Year was not yet over.

A man in a passing 'rickishaw craned round as I sped by, shouted something, and my runner stopped. His man turned round.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" he said.

"Me too, Henderson," I answered; and naturally so, since I had not seen him for eight years.

"What on earth brings you here?" he said.

"Ship's surgeon. And you?"

"Rubber! Perak! Hole of a place! Spend my time gently persuading my Chinks with a revolver not to run away to the tin-mines in too great numbers.

for my directors' comfort. Sick to death of it. I'm over here for a holiday."

"It's a bit of a change from reading for the Bar," I hazarded.

"Moral suasion for legal suasion," he said. "Always was fond of the bar," he added sardonically.

I had been trying to remember what it was. Of course that was it: "Too fond of the bar."

"Who's you pal?" he said.

I looked up. The Chief Steward's runner had stopped, and turned half round. The whole *rencontre* was awkward in the extreme. I had never known Henderson well; and the Chief Steward was the Chief Steward. With me—a shipmate—he was all right; but with Henderson—— The Chief Steward was a very decent fellow; and I would not have hurt his feelings for the world.

"It's deuced hot here," said Henderson. "Let's all adjourn for a quencher."

An unexpected relief came to me. The world, after all, is a small place; and one's faculty for astonishment quickly exhausts itself. We pulled up alongside the Chief Steward.

"I wasn't sure it was you when you passed; and I looked round," said the Steward. "I was surprised, though, to see you talking to our doctor."

Henderson had been staring at him. Then his eyes brightened suddenly.

"Gee whiz," he said. "Why, it's Bruce." He turned to me: "D—n it. We went through the Cuban

war together, fighting for the Yanks. This bangs Banagher. Come on, you fellows."

He gave an order in fluent Malay, and soon we were stringing after his 'rickishaw along the straight white road. Turning a corner, we sped for a short distance along a quiet side street, and finally drew up at the porticoed doorway of a restaurant. He led the way into a big, cool, columned room with an open roof, and a fountain of running water in the centre of the marble floor. There were lots of little marble-topped tables and Indian cane lounges around; and it was a great relief after the glaring sunshine outside to drop limply into a chair, and listen to the grateful plashing of the water. Already the other two were rapidly comparing reminiscences, and retailing subsequent experiences. The proprietor now appeared, a smiling, soft-footed Hungarian. It was evident Henderson was *persona grata* in the house.

"My shout! What'll you fellows have?" he said. Presently the proprietor's daughter appeared, very plump, very black-eyed, very pale-faced, very black-haired. Again it was evident that Henderson was very much at home.

She sat and chatted with us amiably, with a large, good-natured coquettishness: Had we seen the decorations? Weren't they fine? What! We didn't know what they were for! Hadn't we heard the Duke of Connaught was to be here on Monday, coming up from Singapore? Ah, of course we had only arrived that morning. Pinang—no, it was not as gay as Singapore; but then Pinang had the "Crag." The "Crag" was

delightful—so cool; Singapore people envied them the “Crag”; they had no place where they could get cool. We must really go and see the “Crag.” She talked on easily. We were half somnolent. Her big black eyes turned from one to the other eloquently. She moved her plump hands, dead white with a subcuticular duski-ness, as she talked. Once she touched Henderson’s casually; and he raised his eyes to hers. When she moved, her body fell into voluptuous curves. Her thick round lips smiled continuously. She betrayed her native blood in the swinging silence of her movements, in the deferential, eager way she listened to any casual remark of ours, in her Oriental taste in scents, in her look of perfect ease in the heat, in the almost imperceptible oiliness of her skin, in the deft way she managed her cigarette, in a thousand-and-one other little ways that could not be defined.

After an interval I caught the Steward’s eye.

“I must be going! I’ve got to see the ship’s com-prador, and get back,” he said.

“Me too,” I said.

Henderson protested. Why hurry? It wasn’t every day, &c., &c. He was very comfortable; and why shouldn’t we make an evening of it? He didn’t feel inclined to move. The daughter of the house dropped her big black lashes over her big black eyes, and smiled. Her fingers under the cover of his glass pressed Henderson’s for a moment, and were gone. No! He was dashed if he’d move! Let the ’rickishaw men wait. That’s what they were for. Well, if we must be going—see us again to-morrow. No! Filled up to-morrow!

Well, perhaps next day! It wasn't every day one saw one's old pals, &c., &c.

We left it at that. He ordered another drink, and lay back. I turned at the doorway. The black-eyed daughter of the house was handing it, leaning over him, smiling down into his eyes.

We did not see him again. I don't suppose we ever shall. The world is full of Hendersons. I remembered his people—his nice old mother in a lace cap, his two proud sisters—and wondered what they would think if they could see Henderson, sitting soaking at the other end of the world, smiled on by the half-caste daughter of a saloon-keeper. Perhaps it was just as well they did not know. Sometimes I have idly wondered since what has become of Henderson. Probably he is back in Perak making dividends for you and the other people who dabble in rubber. Sometimes I have wondered, is the black-eyed daughter of the saloon-keeper with him? Perhaps not. Perhaps, after all, it never came to anything. Perhaps he's dead. I shouldn't wonder. People like Henderson do not last.

We found the ship's comprador, a big greasy Bengali, having his afternoon *siesta*, and, the ship's business done, turned for the pier again. The Steward's 'rickshaw stopped suddenly, and I drew level.

"Say, Doc! That's a Japanese tea-house. Would you like to go in? It'll not be quite the thing; but you'll get an idea before we get there."

We entered into a stone hall. A brick staircase ran up from it, the steps washed as scrupulously clean as an

operating theatre in a hospital. Three pairs of Japanese sandals lay on the lowermost steps. We mounted, and found our way into a room looking on the street. There was no glass in the windows, string bead-curtains letting in a subdued light. The room was without furniture, except for a divan, and a round table in the centre of the floor. Presently a petite figure shuffled in, smiling joyously, showing her beautiful white teeth, her little white tabi peeping below the grey kimono, her slit-like eyes twinkling, her coal-black hair a *cheval de frise* of combs. She brought us chairs to sit on.

"We won't get those in Japan, nor the table either," he said.

"Coffee?"—Yes, we could have coffee.

She tripped away to get it. It came in two cups, like those one sees in restaurants used for Bovril, one labelled "Remember me," the other "Forget me not." There were things with them like china medicine spoons.

"This is not in the picture," he said.

While we had our coffee she sat cross-legged on a cushion on the divan, smoking a cigarette out of a little Japanese pipe, and conversing with us as if she had known us all her life.

"That's all right," he said.

I looked on as a spectator while he talked. I was beyond my depth in the bandied Japanese expression. What I could make out was this:

"Belong Yokohama? No savvy Yokohama. No

savvy Kobe. No savvy Nagasaki. Savvy Pinang." Apparently she had been born in Pinang.

"Make love? No savvy. No can. Number 1 fine girl house opposite—she all right; me no good. Have got sweetheart? No savvy," smiling all the time.

"This is not in the bill either, Doc."

It was all strange to me; but I was learning.

On board the ship, when we got back it was vastly more cool; but the noise was incessant. The simplest manœuvre seemed to require an enormous amount of shouting among the coolies. Every one gave his opinion; no one paid any attention to that of the other; but the work went on relentlessly, for the company has its reputation to keep up of clearing cargo more quickly than any other in the East, working, as they do, night and day in every port. At intervals whole gangs would cease, and squat down in circles around the curry-cooks, who prepared their periodic meals in various corners of the ship, beating up the fresh curries in great wooden bowls held between their prehensile toes. Afterwards they would fall to again with renewed vigour; another lighter would be filled; and, raising its great bamboo yard and latticed sail, glide quietly off in the eye of the westering sun.

These coolies are not Malays. They are locally known as "Klings," and are imported from the Deccan in Southern India. The Malay would scorn to labour as they do. He has the aristocratic contempt for toil which Mohammedanism seems to breed in many races. He does not mind being a policeman; for then, with

his thin rattan, he can beat any Chinaman he has a special grudge against with impunity. He likes being a soldier, swaggering in uniform, and letting off a gun occasionally. He cannot understand the rooted objection we have to his being a pirate; it is one of his lasting regrets that this pleasant method of adding to the gaiety of nations is no longer permissible. It is only within recent years it has been stopped in British waters; it still occurs sporadically in Dutch territory. The pilot who brought us into Singapore told us some things about them. What he did not tell us was that his own wife had been butchered before his eyes, when he was captain of a coasting schooner, and his ship taken one moonless night, thirty years before.

"He never speaks of that," said the "Old Man."

The Malay has a vast contempt for the Chinaman. In the old days when he owed him money, and the Chinaman worried him for payment, that Chinaman was removed; he joined his ancestral ghosts. We have stopped all that too, very abruptly and painfully; the Malay doesn't quite understand why. It seems so obviously the right thing to "rob" the infidel; the pigtail seems so specially designed to be caught hold of; and the nice wriggly "kris" the weapon foreordained for the work. He cannot see why we should object. Still, he does his best to bear us no ill-will. It is obvious we do not know a good thing when we see it. Our short-sightedness grieves him. He is sorry for us.

The Malay is, of all things, a philosopher. He squats in the warm sun and chews betel contentedly. He sees the obvious foolishness of working in a country

too hot for toil, when the earth is so prolific that a fortnight's leisurely labour will produce food for a year, and the water so plentifully supplied with fish that an hour, in the cool of the evening with a net, will supply luxury for a fortnight. He looks with a contemplative pity at the yellow man toiling in the heat of the day, and with continual surprise at the white man for not appropriating the fruits of the yellow man's labour, since he so obviously has the power to do so.

I sat in my deck-chair watching the harbour lazily. It was a continuous panorama of things strange, bizarrely curious.

A huge Chinese junk, looking like a model of the *Great Harry*, with enormous painted eyes on either side her bow, to see with in the night, and a castellated structure in the stern, reminiscent of Elizabethan romance, dropped anchor a couple of cable lengths away, and quickly made her presence felt by the odour of rotten fish brought to us on the land breeze. Sampans and little steam launches shot continuously backwards and forwards across the harbour. A long black boat under great cone-shaped sails glided rapidly past. It looked snakishly wicked and fast. Afterwards I grew familiar with the type. It was a Bugis prau from Macassar, where I saw hundreds of them; and was the kind of boat beloved of the now extinct pirates.

Presently a big P. & O. from Singapore came across our field of vision, with the "Blue Peter" flying at the fore, dropped anchor, swung down her gangways, discharged some passengers, picked up some more from

the tender, took in a sampan-load or two of fruit, weighed anchor, and was off again.

A crowd of sampans drew away from her as she started; and the sound of bursting crackers came from several of them. They were Chinese sampans; and their owners were thereby frightening away any devils that might have managed to slip unobserved from the P. & O. to them,—that kind of devil being known to be particularly malevolent.

Abaft the galley a sampan had hitched on to a lighter. It was evidently the home of a complete Chinese family, any one of whom, except the baby in arms, was capable of working the boat. The eldest daughter of the house, alone in the boat, was busy preparing a meal, apparently a feast. She had got a chicken, and, after the manner of the Chinese, had cut it up, preparatory to cooking, into innumerable small pieces, washing every portion carefully, wasting absolutely nothing—not even the head and feet. Everything finished, she placed the portions carefully on a platter, and went aft to do something. I happened to be leaning over the rail near the galley at the time. Unfortunately the Fourth Steward also appeared, at that moment, on the well-deck below. He had been cleaning up the “Glory Hole”; and, contrary to all regulations, port and ship alike, without ever looking over the side, and before I could give a shout of warning, he suddenly shot a whole bucketful of filthy, greasy water over the gunwale. It caught the sampan; it caught the dish; it caught the carefully divided chicken, fair and square; and the whole collection was swept neatly into the

water, where it rapidly floated away in the tide. I shouted, of course, when it was too late. With chap-fallen face the steward gazed over the side. A storm of abuse greeted him from that sampan. She cursed him, his father and mother, sisters and brothers, uncles and aunts, ancestors to the third, offspring to the fourth generation. The steward fled. She looked then as if she meant to turn the vials of her wrath on me; but a big Singapore dollar, dropped into the boat, altered the whole horizon, a chicken being worth not more than fourpence. An expansive grin spread violently across her unattractive face. She quickly let loose from the lighter; and the last I saw of her was the disappearing outline of the sampan making shorewards for another chicken.

Returning to the saloon deck, I fell into the hands of "Chang Wan Loo"—a tailor, very fat, very oleaginous, very obsequious, with enormous alpaca trousers, fifteen sizes too big for him. The Chief said that in spite of the cut of his trousers he was a good tailor; so I asked him if I could have three white suits made, washed, and delivered before seven o'clock the next morning. He was eloquently helpless when I made the demand. It seemed a lot; but the Chief said: "Stick to it."

"Dhoby-men (washermen), Pinang side, no good. Chinamen, New Yeah, plenty Samshu, plenty Hocshu. Dhoby men all dlunk. Tailoh men all-li. Can makee clo. No can makee wash."

I hardened my heart.

"All right. Maskee. Can get, Singapore side, plenty much more cheap."

That settled him. The clothes turned up, beautifully made, beautifully washed, next morning. I gave him an extra dollar, promptly ordered half a dozen more suits, and also wrote him a testimonial which, no doubt, is now helping to persuade vacillating new arrivals of the incomparable merit of Chang Wan Loo.

The "Old Man" and I had arranged overnight to ascend to the Crag Hotel on the morrow; and so the steward called me at daybreak.

"Captain says the launch will be here in half an hour, sir. I'd better pack you three suits."

"But I'm only off for the day," I said in surprise. He grinned.

"Need 'em all, sir."

"And it's pleasure I'm out for," I groaned.

I found the "Old Man" struggling with the intricacies of a bow when a warning hoot told us the launch was coming.

"D—n the thing. I'll never get it right," he said, his face red with irritation.

I tried for him, but found it difficult to reverse in my mind. Then I had an inspiration.

"If I stand behind you, captain, I can tie it over your shoulders, in front of the glass."

It worked. The "Old Man's" face was wreathed in smiles. He got into his coat rapidly as a knock came at the door.

"Come in," he said; and the steward announced "Mr. Maurice."

There is something fascinatingly neat and trim in the spotless whiteness and semi-military cut of the dress of the Englishman in the Far East. Every one looks well in it.

Maurice, to whom I took an instant liking the moment I saw his smiling bronzed face under the white helmet, looked the part to perfection.

"I wouldn't bother about carrying a watch, if I were you, Doc.; and don't bring any money, either. We can sign 'chits' for anything we want," he said.

Accordingly I discarded the watch and money.

"We never carry jewellery or money about in Pinang," he told me later in explanation. "You see, we're one white man to three hundred coloured. We have to keep up our personal prestige; and so we try to avoid tempting any one to rob, or steal, from the person by having nothing valuable about us. Every one signs 'chits' for everything; and they are presented once a month, and paid by cheque on one's bank."

"Chit" signing is universal in the Far East. No one ever thinks of paying in money. Two men will stroll into an hotel, play a game of billiards, order iced drinks and cigars, sit smoking on the verandah for an hour, and then one will call out:

"Boy! Chit!"

A silent Chinaman will appear with a "chit-book" on a salver.

One of the men will pick it up:

"How much, boy?"

"Twoa dolla, hifty cent."

He will tear out a "chit," write "I owe two dollars fifty cents. Billiards, &c.," date it, sign his name and address, and hand it to the boy, who as likely as not has never seen him before. It will turn up at his office or residence at the end of the month, be duly met, and then destroyed.

The little launch, with its smartly uniformed Malay crew, ran us quickly to the pier. It was about half past seven in the morning, and beautifully cool. We drove a tica-gharrhy along the straight wide palm-lined road, with its white bungalows far back among the trees, each peeping through a wealth of tropical vegetation. Halting at the "Club" to pick up Maurice's suit case, we soon were again speeding towards the foot of the hill, passing on the way many of the gorgeously gold-lettered, marble-columned, lantern-hung bungalows of the wealthy Chinese merchants, which for the most part quite outshone in display those of the dominant race. The "Old Man" grunted disapproval of the sight.

"The Dutch don't let them lord it like that in Java. Chinks can only live in certain parts of the towns there. There was a wealthy Chinaman in Soerabaya who built a beautiful house for himself, and when it was finished found it was just outside the area in which a Chinaman was permitted to live. It cost him 100,000 guilders to build; and it's never been occupied. He can't live in it himself; he can't rent it, for no Dutchman would be his tenant; he can't sell it to a Dutchman, for it is too near

China town for comfort," the "Old Man" said. "So there it is derelict."

Maurice laughed.

"Our Chinamen are very loyal here. It was quite comical during the South African War to hear pig-tailed, slit-eyed fellows talking of 'we Britishers—our defeats—our successes.'"

"D——d cheek," muttered the "Old Man."

Gradually the bungalows ceased; and the country grew more primitive. Native "campongs," with rickety, stilted, brown thatched atap huts, appeared. Primitive open native shops on the roadside, brown babies rolling in the dust, little boys driving fierce-looking water-buffaloes, were constant sights. Groves of peepil, tamarind, and cocoa-nut trees, plantains, mangoes, and bananas, lined the road on either side.

We stopped eventually at the foot of the hill, opposite a rude shelter, from which came a wild rush of copper-coloured men in sarongs, with unkempt black locks straggling from beneath gay-coloured turbans.

These were "Klings" waiting to carry one's luggage up the hill. Maurice picked out three; and we started to ascend on foot. It was now about nine o'clock; and already it was getting appreciably hotter. The path wound steadily upwards in sinuous, serpentine coils amongst the hills. For the most part it lay in the shadow of the overhanging trees. New vistas continually opened as we ascended—glimpses of valleys dense with jungle timber, with here and there a bungalow perched on a craggy point. The path cut its way through masses of coarse botryoidal sandstone, with



A COCOA-NUT GROVE, PINANG.

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here and there a jutting grey mass of igneous rock outcropping. Groves of bamboo whispered murmurously at intervals; and creeping, vivid-leaved bougainvillea vines, enormously long, wound for hundreds of yards, interlacing amongst the njamploeing trees. It was very still, except for the sound of our footsteps, till at irregular, and ever startling, intervals the cicadas broke in with their unexpected rasping rattle.

The "Old Man" plodded doggedly upwards; and we followed, accommodating our speed to his, the coolies, with our baggage perched on their heads, swinging easily in the rear.

Once a pale-faced European, slung in a dhooly, carried by six men, swept past us down the hill; and once a Chinese lady, going to take the air, passed us upwards, carried by four men, sitting in her sedan chair with whitened cheeks, immobile as a graven image.

I watched a dark patch start on the broad back of the "Old Man," and spread till his jacket, soaked in perspiration, clung to him like a glove.

"It's getting deuced hot," he said, as he stopped to mop his face, now the colour of a well-boiled lobster.

"You're taking pounds off your weight," I reminded him, by way of encouragement.

That stimulated him for another half-mile.

"I'm melting away; and you fellows haven't turned a hair," he said, at length, after an interval.

"The half-way house is round the next turn," said Maurice.

"Lord! Are we only half way?" he groaned.

The "Half-way House" was a nipah-thatched roof

supported on corner posts. We were all glad of a rest when we reached it; and sat there while we smoked a cigarette apiece, fanning ourselves at intervals with our helmets. When Maurice suggested starting again the "Old Man" was very loath to move.

"If it weren't for the thought of the long iced drink at the top, I couldn't do it," he said.

"It's the bath I'm thinking of," said Maurice. "Ever had a Malay bath, Doc.? No! Well, you'll enjoy it all the more then."

By this time the heat had become sweltering. The winding path seemed endless. We plodded on in silence. Even Maurice began to feel it, and it was with a sigh of relief that he said at last:

"The next turn will bring us to the top, and the hotel, captain."

The hotel was quite unlike anything usually associated with the name. It was more like a village of bungalows perched here and there alongside winding shady paths, grouped around one big central spacious dining-hall, standing on a platform of granite which was evidently the core of the long extinct volcano that had given birth to the island.

Our room was one of a row of twenty in a long one-storeyed, wooden, verandahed building of sleeping apartments intended for bachelors, so arranged that the wind swept through them from the open balcony behind, which projected over a precipice with a sheer drop of several hundred feet to the jungle-clad ravines below.

Depositing our traps on the floor, the coolies were

dismissed, to squat contentedly in the shade for hours till we should require them again. A solemn Chinese waiter stood like a Buddha till he should have received our orders. The "Old Man" dropped with a sigh of relief into a cane lounge chair which stretched invitingly in the wind-swept verandah behind.

"Boy! A long whisky-polly! Savvy?" he called out.

"I savvy," the Chinaman said solemnly; and then he glanced at us.

Maurice and I decided, however, to wait till we had had our bath.

"But where is the bath?" I said.

Maurice pointed to a trap-door in the floor, which up to then I had not noticed. "Down there, Doc. You go first."

The luxury of a bath after exertion in the Tropics is something to be felt rather than described. It is so ineffably soothing and yet exhilarating. Little wonder all Eastern religions make of it a ritual.

A Malay bath is strange on first acquaintance. I went down a ladder into a little square brick room, with only a tiny opening, the size of one brick, high up on the outside wall to give light. In one corner stood a barrel, breast high, into which water trickled from a pipe. Floating in the barrel was a dipper, made of a half cocoanut shell with a handle. One stood on the brick floor, and ladled the ice-cold water over one with the dipper. From the floor the water ran into a shallow groove, and then out and down the mountain-side.

It was worth the climb, three times over, to have the exhilarating sensations of that bath, and the languorous feeling of content that followed.

Clad in fresh clean suits of white, we presently strolled comfortably round to the great verandahed smoke-room looking down on the wide vista below—a vista of miles on miles of tree-clad ravines winding to the distant toylike town, with the blue strait beyond on which the great ships looked like tiny ants. Further still the eye swept across the jungle-fringed Province Wellesley, on the other side, and over miles of paddy fields, till on the utmost limits of vision the white-cloud-capped peaks of Kedah rose blue in the shimmering haze.

Lazily we lay looking at it, wrapped in a ruminating silence. I watched the faint blue smoke of my cigar rising, while Maurice, with a collection of coloured bottles, a rattan swizzle, fresh limes, soda syphons, pounded ice, and the air of a connoisseur, concocted some nectar of the gods for our prospective delectation.

"I withdraw every word I said on the way up," said the "Old Man," with a long sigh of content. "It was worth it. I've just weighed myself, and I'm four pounds lighter. Besides, going down is nothing," he added characteristically.

A Chinese waiter approached a fat German sitting in a chair not far from us.

"I vil haf vat dese gentlemen haf," he said.

Maurice looked up and smiled:

"Ours is a special recipe of my own, sir—a patent 'sling.'"

The German threw up his hands in horror.

"Ach! No. I am 'dedodal.' I vill haf 'gin mit soda,' boy."

"D—n all Dutchmen," said the "Old Man" in quite an audible voice.

"Thought you liked Dutchmen, Cap.?" said Maurice with a smile.

"Hollanders, not Germans," said the "Old Man."

"Sailors," I explained, "divide the earth into British—which includes all English-speaking people—Froggies, Dutch—which means Germans and all of that ilk—Dagoes—meaning thereby Mediterranean Europeans—and Niggers—all coloured people."

Presently a great gong boomed somewhere amongst the trees.

"Tiffin," said Maurice.

The big cool dining-room was almost full when we walked along the shaded path to it. People had come from all parts of the Malay States to be present on the arrival of the Duke of Connaught; and most of them had gravitated up here. They were an interesting crowd to watch—bronzed military men with keen, worn faces, and the look of pioneers, younger men, not yet stamped with the die of command, in startling contrast, pale-faced officials of the civil administration, governing the country from the shelter of punkah-swept offices, and here and there a few prosperous merchants, lawyers, and doctors, indistinguishable from the other civilians.

Then there were the women. One shrinks from describing Englishwomen in the Far East. I looked

round the room. Some of them may have been beautiful once—the East had finished that. Now they all looked like those elderly spinisters who live a more or less predatory life on Bloomsbury boarders—pale, thin or pastily fat, cadaverous, hollow-eyed.

The soft complexions, the graceful contour, once present in some of them, had paid a heavy toll to the moist steamy-hot climate. One cannot live in a continuous Turkish bath without showing it. The bronzed lean men, used to the open and constant physical exercise, had gained, by reason of the climate, an air of ascetic dignity—the lines on their brows did not matter. But in the women a sedentary life, the tedium of movement in garments unsuitable to the climate, the necessary separation, for years perhaps, from their children, the consequent emptiness of their lives, the eagerness, therefore, with which they clutched at any form of excitement, all were reflected in the thin sharpness of their voices and their general air of querulous discontent.

It is a sorry place for women—the Far East.

There was one woman, however, who looked a queen amongst them all. She was sitting with her husband; and none of the other women, I noticed, appeared to see her. I asked Maurice the reason.

“Native blood,” he answered quietly.

It was that, probably, that had enabled her, in some mysterious way, to defy the climate by remaining fresh and young. The taint was slight, only about an eighth. In England she would have passed anywhere, but here in the East—no; she was not “Pukka white,” and

that was an end of it—she was not “received.”

It seemed to weigh lightly on her. She was smiling and chatting gaily with the group of men who gathered round her table; but one cannot tell what “gall and wormwood” she swallowed inwardly. No doubt when the great “muck-a-mucks” were being officially received by the Duke of Connaught on the morrow, she would be one of the uninvited. Perhaps she would feel it; probably, if she did, she would never show it. But to a woman these things mean more than mere man can ever comprehend. I saw her husband watching her with adoring eyes. Perhaps in that she found her world complete.

Once or twice during the “tiffin” the “Old Man” glanced apologetically at me.

“Regimen be hanged,” I said; and he looked immensely relieved.

“Captain’s been reducing himself by dieting,” I explained.

“These curries are delicious,” said the “Old Man.” “Try this ‘Gula Malacca,’ Doc. I remember it of old.”

No wonder he did. I remember its delicate nutty flavour, and the added joy of the fresh green cocoanut-milk, even unto this day. Maurice smiled at our enthusiasm.

“I admit it’s almost worth standing the heat for,” he said. “But at times I long, in a way you fellows can never understand, for a dish of English strawberries and cream. I’d give a month’s pay for that.”

That started us off; and then we talked of home and

country, of green lanes and English roses, of little wayside inns and the smell of apple orchards, of London hansoms, restaurants in Soho, and the lights of Piccadilly Circus—and I watched Maurice's face light up, and his eyes glow, and his head rise proudly, and thought of the little people who dwell in streets, and know not England. A passing Malay waiter, lean, brown-faced, under a scarlet turban, caught his eye, and brought him back to reality.

"Stop, you fellows," he said, half joking, yet half in earnest. "I don't want to think of it any more. It'll be five long years before I can see it all again."

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After "tiffin" the public rooms became a desert. Every one, including ourselves, retired for the afternoon *siesta* in the wide, mosquito-netted bedrooms; and it was not till several hours of dreamless slumber had fled that our Chinese boy awakened us with tea.

We took it in long chairs on the verandah of our bedroom, gazing down over the precipitous cliffs sweeping hundreds of feet below to the tree-clad ravines lying between the lower heights, covered by forests of arecanut trees that stretched for miles and miles to southward over the edge of the horizon.

Maurice threw up his arms with a long sigh of content.

"It's much too soon to be moving yet. Though it's cool enough here, it's a furnace below. Let's play billiards."

Every one plays billiards in the Far East; and every one is much better than the average player at home, for

it is a game that can be played comfortably in hot climates. The tables, however, are invariably abominable, even in the best hotels, probably due to the heat warping things and the plague of ants.

Thus the afternoon was idled away till Maurice decided it was time to start down the mountain again, to get to the bottom before the rapid tropical night made progress difficult. Our Kling porters seemed never to have moved from where they had squatted outside our quarters in the morning. Every time we passed we found them in the same position, their wild eyes following us carefully for any sign that they were needed.

"Think they must be fresh from the Deccan, don't understand our ways, and so are afraid to leave where they know our baggage is," said Maurice indifferently.

At a sign they seized our traps, and we started. The descent was comparatively easy. We reached the base a few minutes after sunset. But here a complication arose. Maurice had been right in his conjecture that our Klings were new arrivals. That would not have mattered; but what did was that they did not understand the "chit" system, and we had not a cent between us. Maurice explained in Malay that they would be paid on presenting the "chit" the next morning. But they did not understand Malay; and so, gesticulating wildly, they ran after the 'rickishaws when we started. Soon, however, we left them behind.

"They'll find out all about it from the others," he said philosophically.

Riding back in the darkness, in the cool evening air,

behind the dim figure of the runner, put the finish to a perfect day. Every one seemed to be out on that particular night. Strings of twinkling 'rickishaws, each with its sidelights, came in and out of gateways, or passed us, each holding dim white figures, half recognisable as the passing light shone in on them. The white porticoed bungalows were all aglow like fairy palaces in their tropical framework. The long straight stems of the cocoanut trees, lining the road, flashed endlessly in the light as we passed; while the land breeze murmured gently in their feathery tops far overhead.

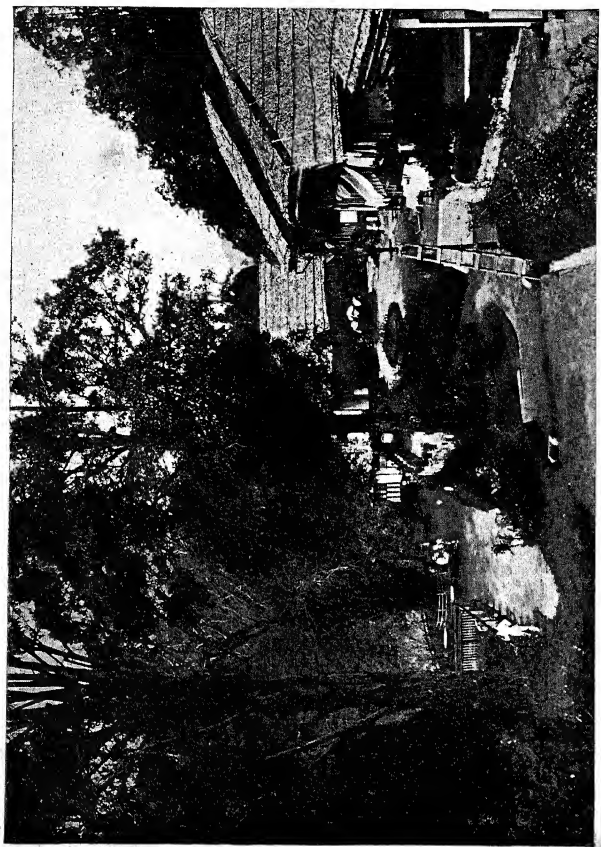
Presently we arrived at the "International," where we had arranged to have "machin" (dinner). The menu was written in Malay, so the "Old Man" and I ate in faith.

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Fancy is a curious thing. There are people one likes at once, others one takes an immediate antipathy to—why, one cannot explain; it is the riddle of Dr. Fell.

After dinner we foregathered with two or three friends of Maurice's, who were dining in the hotel. One I took a particular liking to. He was very quiet; he was a Scotchman; I could see he was drinking more than was good for him; and yet I knew immediately I should like him.

He smiled gravely at me, and hitched his chair round to my side. We sat in the big verandah, under a whirring electric fan, in big cane basket chairs, around a little table. Two silent bare-footed Malay waiters stood behind us. The cigars were good, the coffee



BUNGALOWS AT THE CRAG, PINANG.

excellent; every one felt pleasantly post-prandial.

"What do those three d——d niggers want?" said one of the men suddenly.

Every one turned round to look. We three, as it happened, all had our backs to the open space, in front of the hotel; and on turning we saw three brown, half naked figures standing at the foot of the steps, staring silently up at us. Immediately one of them held up a "chit" towards Maurice.

"Why, it's our Klings," he said in surprised vexation. "They must have followed us the whole way here. They evidently think we're trying to do them out of their pay."

"Deuced cheek of them following you here," said the man who had first noticed them.

"They don't understand," Maurice explained.

"Deuced cheek, all the same," the other replied.

Evidently the Malay policeman thought so too. The Malays hate the Klings almost as much as they do the Chinese; and our waiters had heard the muttered disapproval. Something was said to the policeman; and immediately he precipitated himself on the three figures. There was a brief violent scuffle; and then all three disappeared beyond the range of light, mixed up with the policeman, who presently reappeared smiling joyfully.

The "residents" took it all as a matter of course.

"Why not pay them from the hotel?" I suggested mildly.

The "Old Man" nodded approval; but all the "resi-

dents," even the good-natured Irish doctor, negatived the suggestion.

"Ye haven't to be livin' here," he said. "We have; an' its these poor divils have to be taught not to be botherin' us for nothin' an' it's the Malay policeman enjoys himself teachin' them that same," he added with a grin.

The Scotchman—Guthrie—looked at me and smiled.

"You think it very high-handed?" he said.

I nodded.

"Man, if you come to think of it, our mere presence in the country is the most insufferable high-handedness. We haven't a moral leg to stand on."

"Who's talkin' about not being able to stand so early in the evening?" protested the Irish doctor. "You say you're not goin' to the 'Reception,' Guthrie! Well, then, I'll toss Roberts, best of three, who wears your frock-coat and 'topper' to-morrow. Haven't worn one since I went round Merrion Square, I don't want to think how many years ago, when I was lookin' for testimonials, to gull long-sufferin' lay committees, when I was up for a job."

This was a subject of vastly greater importance than any Kling's feelings. Frock-coats were scarce in Pinang. No one used them. They did not suit the climate. But they would be *de rigueur* on the Duke's arrival on the morrow; there were not enough to go round; and every one who hadn't got one was hunting round amongst his friends who had.

So the Klings were totally forgotten in the excitement of watching the throw of the dice.

"Three fives in two. I'll stand," said the doctor.

The other man rattled the dice-box and threw.

"Three sixes in one," he said calmly. "Mine, Doc."

The Irishman laughed.

"Never mind," he said. "It's lucky in love I'll be. Besides, I'll charge old 'Cheong Ta' double fees for seeing him when I ought to be at the 'Reception' I can't go to; for 'every little helps,' as the captain said when he threw his wife overboard to lighten the ship in a storm."

"At any rate," said Guthrie, the owner of the clothes, "we all score a dinner off the winner. You'll come, captain, and you, Doc.?"

"We sail to-morrow morning. Otherwise——," the "Old Man" said.

"So. Then you'll miss all the excitement. But then I forget. It's nothing to you fellows. To us it will be the main topic of conversation for months. You lucky devils living at home. You'll be back in England in two or three months. As for us, we're chained——" His voice trailed off in a sigh of regret.

"Hasn't seen his wife for three years—poor old Guthrie," Maurice explained afterwards. "Climate nearly killed her. Had to send her home. Deuced fond of each other. Rotten hard lines. Men shouldn't marry in the East."

A native bearer came hurriedly up the steps of the verandah, and delivered a note. The waiter brought it to the doctor; and he tore it open casually.

"Excuse me, you fellows," he said.

As he read the look of a good-fellowship faded, his

eyes grew grave, his mouth firm. I could see the professional mask falling like a drop-curtain over his whimsical countenance.

"Sorry," he said, getting up abruptly, "I'll have to leave you fellows. Got a call."

The "Old Man" caught my eye. We rose simultaneously.

"We should be back at our ship, too," he said.

"Don't let me break up the party," the doctor protested, hailing his 'rickshaw at the same time with a preoccupied air.

"No. Don't go, you fellows," Guthrie said sleepily over his cigar.

Our 'rickshaw men had appeared, however, as if by magic from the darkness.

"It's rather late; and we've got some things to do," said the "Old Man."

Guthrie nodded somnolently, looking at us stupidly.

"Better say good-bye to Guthrie, then," said Maurice. "He's living at the hotel. I'll see you as far as the pier."

So we said good-bye and left him. The doctor had already hurried off.

One meets so many good fellows just for a day in passing. One feels one would like to know more of them; and then one's paths diverge. I have the picture in my mind, quite sharply still, of Guthrie as we left him, lying limply in a long cane chair, his thin spare figure clothed in white drill, a series of coloured glasses on a little table in front of him, two or three silent saronged brown figures hanging sedulously in the back-

ground, with a fan whirring overhead trying to create a current of air in the still tropic night, heavy with the scent of "ylang-ylang" and tuberose all around. I can see the body of Guthrie, lying there, drinking more than is good for it, while his mind is some 8,000 miles away in a little island we call "home," wandering in fancy with the one woman in the world for him.

The East is full of "Guthries," and England of "grass widows." Some of them—but is it any use being cynical? Time, absence, and opportunity make culprits of most of us. For life is, after all, for the most part, a desert with unexpected "oases," which most of us have an unhappy knack of missing, finding "sand" only, or perhaps, worse still, the "mirage." Let us hope Guthrie had the better fate.

Maurice joined us on the ship at breakfast. The first thing we asked was "were our Klings paid."

He laughed. "Oh, yes! That's all right! They found out things in the night, and came to the 'office' this morning, with some one who had explained to them. I talked to the man who it seems is their head, and asked him how he dared send out 'coolies' without explaining the customs to them. I put the fear of God into that chap. So it won't occur again."

"That's all right," said the "Old Man."

"Of course!" said Maurice quietly. "Honesty is our policy in the East. It's the greatest mistake possible to 'do' the nigger. That's where the Portuguese failed, where the Germans are failing to-day, and where the Japanese will lose if they don't change pretty quick."

"That's so," said the Chief. "It's a pity the Jap is such a rogue. The man I like is good old John Chinaman."

"Hear, hear," said the "Old Man." "John Chinaman is dirty. He's as wily as an Armenian, and the Armenian can beat the Jew any day; he'll drive the hardest bargain possible with you; but his word is his bond, and he'll keep it even if he loses heavily by it. Yes, sir; John Chinaman is a gentleman."

And this I found was the general opinion throughout the Far East. When one dealt with a Chinaman one felt safe that the bargain would be carried out. With a Jap, on the other hand, one preferred to have one's money in advance.

I went ashore with Maurice after breakfast, partly to do some shopping, partly to look up an old 'Varsity chum who was in the Colonial Service there. Eventually I found him sitting as a judge in the courts. He was trying some wretched Chinamen who were accused of letting off fireworks to the public danger in Beach Street. Rather to the surprise of the prosecution, he let them off with a nominal fine. I found, then, he had seen me at the back of the court, for he presently sent round to ask me to come to his office.

"Do you know," he said later, "it was something in your eye made me let those Chinks off. I couldn't help thinking, when I saw you, of how we once started a fire in the 'Bay,' and commandeered the basket chair of a man neither of us knew to make it burn more vigorously. I thought of the delight we had when we dodged the 'Junior Dean,' and got back safe to our

rooms without detection. I thought of the elaborate plans we made to decoy the porters off when we wanted to get our fire going strong; and I simply couldn't fine those Chinks."

"It's a sort of belated conscience money," I said.

"Yes, that's about it."

When I got back to the office I found the "ship's papers" were not yet ready; and so while I was waiting for Maurice I cooled down under the office punkah pulled by the quaintest little cross-eyed Chinese boy, sitting with the immobile face of a Buddha, hypnotised by the monotony of his duty. All the clerks were Chinamen. They seem to be the only Orientals with any head for figures. The Japanese are not nearly so trustworthy; the Malay of course is hopeless; but the Chinaman is accurate to three places of decimals. It was a curious meeting of East and West to see a Chinamen. They seem to be the only Orientals with Remington with the speed of a sleight-of-hand artist, his face all the while like that of a graven image.

"Ready?" said Maurice, coming out of an inner office.

"Quite ready," I answered.

We bundled into our 'rickishaws, and hurried to the landing stage. Steam was up when we reached the ship; and our farewells to Maurice were hurried. The "Old Man" as usual, was fuming to get away. In five minutes we were off; the launch with Maurice's waving figure swept shorewards; and soon we were gliding smoothly round the great head of Muka, and slipping

down the Straits of Malacca, bound for Singapore.

Pinang is the gate to our Empire in the Far East. But for Pinang it is probable we should never have had Singapore, or the Federated Malay States, or the British portions of Borneo. They would all in the natural course of events have become absorbed in the Dutch possessions, in "Nederlands Indie," with Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, and the rest. The immense mineral wealth of the Native States, which is at present in British hands, and the now booming rubber industry, would have been monopolised by the Dutch. As luck would have it, we are in possession; and all of our present rights are due to the friendship of an obscure British sea-captain, Francis Light, with a forgotten Malay potentate, the Sultan of Kedah.

The history of how we acquired Pinang reads like a romance; and a romance, be it said, that does not reflect much credit upon England. As a nation we seem to have been the favourites of fortune; our mighty Empire has been acquired almost by haphazard; and the talking shop at Westminster, save in the fatal case of the American colonies, has been rescued time and again from egregious folly by the forethought and timely action of the younger sons, forgotten sailors, or obscure soldiers, who have helped to thrust greatness upon us, often against our will. We have thus been saddled with the burden of Empire, as it were, almost by inadvertence.

Such the story of Pinang, and the life-history of Captain Francis Light, its founder. Leaving the Navy

in 1765, Light went out to India to seek his fortune in the days when India, in popular imagination, was still a land of fabulous gold from which returning "nabobs" came home, with enlarged livers, it is true, but also, at the same time, with untold wealth in rubies, diamonds, pearls, and golden mohurs, locked up in great teak chests, as compensation. The "nabob" bulked as largely in those days as the later Australian and Californian and the present American and South African millionaires do to-day; and Light, no doubt, had golden visions of a similar affluence when he set out for India. At Calcutta he got command of a ship trading to Lower Siam and the Malay States. Everywhere he went, however, he found the hand of the Dutch against him. Established at Malacca, they were jealously watchful of every one encroaching on what they considered their sphere of influence. They tried to prevent the natives trading with the British by every possible device, going so far, sometimes, as to destroy crops rather than that the English should have them. Every petty excuse to harass British shipping was adopted; there were mutual recriminations and retaliations; and in consequence no love was lost between the traders of the rival nations.

In spite of the Dutch, however, Captain Light won the confidence of, and acquired much trading facilities from, the people of Kedah; he became an honoured friend of the sultan; and there is a persistent legend, almost certainly inaccurate, that the sultan gave him one of his daughters in marriage.

Pinang was part of the sultan's possessions; and it

was probably this friendship that suggested to Light its strategic importance as an outpost against the aggression of the Dutch, and its great value as a port of call on the way to China; for it must be remembered that at that time the future Singapore was an unknown and unnamed swamp. At any rate, in 1771 he attempted to interest Warren Hastings, the then Governor-General, in its acquisition; but the attempt failed. The non-success, however, of a later plan to use Achin as a base brought the idea again into prominence; and Light's friendship with the sultan smoothed the way to an agreement. We gained Pinang in return for a pension of 6,000 dollars a year to the sultan, and the promise of protection against his enemies, more particularly the Siamese.

On August 11, 1786, therefore, Light hoisted the British flag, named the island "Prince of Wales" Island in honour of the future George IV., and the capital "Georgetown," after George III. It is now a place of immense trade. The municipal revenue amounts to over a million dollars a year; and there is an enormous future before it, owing to the coffee, tin, and rubber industries. We have held it ever since Light's time; though at one period it was gravely suggested that it should be abandoned, and that the Andaman Islands would be better as a port of call. To the lasting disgrace of England, however, we shuffled out of part of our agreement; and when the Siamese attacked Kedah, in the reign of the succeeding sultan, we supinely allowed it to be overrun and conquered, thus repudiating the treaty made by Light, besmirching his memory

in the eyes of the men who had trusted in his integrity, and casting an ugly blot on the fair fame of England. It was a typical example of the diplomacy of the East India Company; and on a par with its subsequent treatment of one of its greatest servants, Sir Stamford Raffles, Governor of Java and founder of Singapore.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE WAY TO JAPAN

IN an hour after leaving Pinang all signs of land were gone, and we had fallen into the calm routine of sea life again.

The Chief came up from below, and threw himself into a deck-chair beside me with a grunt of satisfaction. "One bell" had gone, and the steward came up on deck with tea.

"It's fine to be at sea again," he said; and I, scarce knowing why, agreed immediately.

Thinking it over, I came to the conclusion that it was the relief from the heat, the confusion, the clash of colours, the babel of tongues, that made one appreciate the neutral tints, and the calm monotony of the sea by contrast. In a day or two, we knew, we would be looking forward to making port again, talking eagerly of what we would do at Singapore; but for the moment the restfulness of the old routine was very pleasant.

As the day waned we gradually approached the land again, a green-rimmed outline, with blue hills behind; and in the darkness of the night that followed the heavy odour of jungle vegetation swept over the ship in waves from the unseen shore. The sea was as glass. Not a wind stirred. Far out to starboard, over

the mountains of Sumatra, the lightning flashes played continuously, without sound.

That evening, as the Chief and I sat watching them, he puffed luxuriously at his cigar, and said, "I'm enjoying this, because in three days' time we'll have turned Singapore and be threshing up the China seas in dirty, squally weather, with the temperature dropping fifteen degrees a day, till we're all shivering in heavy 'blues' again, instead of these thin white duds."

"Lucky for me, I'm running short of whites," I answered.

"Tosh! I can see you can't quite grasp it yet. You just wait," he said in an aggrieved tone.

"Sufficient unto the day," I muttered contentedly in the darkness.

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In the morning I was called to see the ancient city of Malacca, once the greatest port in the Far East, now a mere calling place for little coasting steamers, and native praus from the opposite Sumatran coast.

"We can't get within two miles of the place," said the "Old Man." "It's full of reefs and very shallow. It used to be a great port in the old 'Company' days; but Singapore and Pinang have taken all the trade—nobody goes there now."

Seen from the ship, the city appeared as a huddled line of houses with their backs towards the sea, and their backyards, so to speak, projecting out on pillars in the water, as much as sixty feet (according to the "Old Man") from the shore. This peculiarity in architecture is possible because there is practically no

tide in these seas; and the Chinamen, who love deep, narrow houses, have accordingly seized the opportunity to build right out into the water.

Through the city a little river winds down to the sea; and on a green hill, easily seen from the ship, there stands an old Portuguese cathedral, the famous church of "Our Lady of the Annunciation," scene of the miracles of St. Francis Xavier, that wonderful pioneer missionary.

That is all that remains to commemorate the hundred and thirty years of Portuguese occupation, and the mighty exploits of the redoubtable Albuquerque, unless one includes a plentiful crop of Eurasians with high-sounding Peninsular names.

After the place was captured by the Dutch it flourished mightily; but since it passed to England the advent of steam has sounded its death-knell.

Dampier, who visited the place in 1688, when it was under the Dutch, found the Chinese, even then, in possession of the trade.

"The Chinese also are seated here, who bring the commodities of their country hither, especially tea, sugar-candy, and other sweetmeats. Some of them keep tea-houses, where for a stiver a man can have near a pint of tea [tea was in those days in England a royal luxury] and a little porringer of sugar-candy, or other sweetmeat, if he pleases. Others of these Chinese are tradespeople, and they are all in general very industrious, but withal extraordinary gamesters, and, if they can get any to play with them, all business must submit to that."

The Chinaman now is as the Chinaman then, still a gamester to his finger-tips. Our men in the fo'castle spent hours of their leisure gaming. Sometimes tragedies arise from the habit.

"It was on the voyage before last, when I was on the *Nestor*," said the Chief. "We had a Chink crew; and on the morning after we left Singapore the quartermaster sounded 'seven bells.' There was no answer from the Chink on the 'look-out,' though they could see him quite plainly from the bridge, standing on the fo'castle head looking out to sea. The mate got mad, and sent a quartermaster to 'wake up that darned Chink.' They couldn't waken him—he was dead. He had hanged himself by hitching his pigtail round his neck and over a stanchion. It turned out he had lost all his savings, and gambled away his earnings for the next two years; so he had concluded the best thing was to clear out. He had sounded 'six bells' quite deliberately, and then before the eyes of every one, quite unsuspected, calmly taken his life."

Steaming into Singapore in the early morning is a memory to be marked with a white stone. It is one of the most beautiful sights of the beautiful East.

Gradually the Straits narrow, and the ship passes between the mainland, green with mangrove swamps, creeping out into the water, and island after island, jungle-clad to the uttermost limits of riotous vegetation.

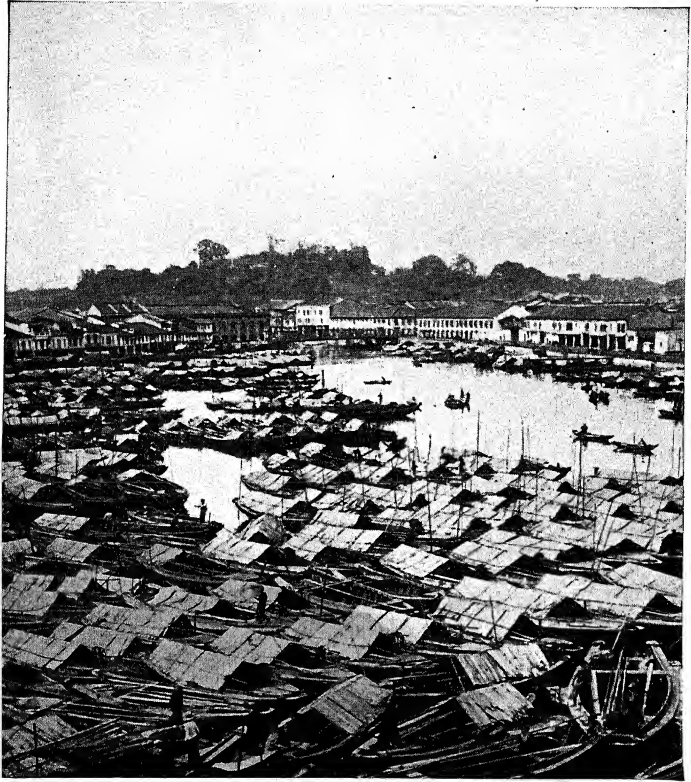
The channel grows narrower and narrower, and, looking closely, one can see the venomous noses of

huge siege guns peeping out on either side from the apparently innocent tree-clad islands—for this is the Gibraltar of the Far East, and England intends to hold it, if necessary, against the world.

Suddenly one seems to have come to an *impasse*; and then the ship takes a sharp turn; there is a sound of swirling water; the trees almost touch the ship's side; and we are through into a wide bay, wharfed along one side, and lined by ships of every nation, flying every known flag, whilst on the other side island after island appears in one long sweeping chain, fading away into the opal distance on the rim of the horizon.

So many strange things strike the eye that the mind refuses to accommodate impressions with sufficient rapidity.

At one moment one catches sight of a queer native village, built entirely on posts in the water, with amphibious little Malay boys playing as contentedly in the sea as English children on the village green, diving like porpoises, upsetting one another out of "dug-outs" not much bigger than themselves, treating the water as if it were their native element. Next some of the islands are studded, laid out as they are like tropical gardens, with the coolest of cool white bungalows scattered here and there over them. But the sailor's eye is irresistibly attracted to the other side, where miles and miles of the "Tanjong Pagar" wharves accommodate ships of every build and nation—coquettish white Dutch mail-boats running to Java, squat Germans, Japanese flying the blood-red "sun" flag, a long white American transport ship refitting for Manila,



NATIVE HARBOUR, SINGAPORE.

[Facing page 120.]

and close to her a grim slate-coloured British cruiser coaling with feverish haste. Blunt-nosed cable ships lay out in the bay, and further out still those pariahs of the ocean, two or three petroleum ships, flying the "danger" flag.

There were three of our own company's ships moored alongside when we arrived; and so, as soon as our gangway was lowered, half a dozen old shipmates of our officers invaded us. Following them came the usual nondescript crowd of native merchants, compradors, Chinese tailors, Bengali money-changers, cheroot merchants, and performing fakirs, one so soon gets accustomed to see on board ship.

"Hullo," said the Chief, "here's our old 'sew-sew' woman." He pointed to a little wrinkled old China-woman climbing up the gangway, carrying a big round basket covered with oilcloth. When she got on deck, she made straight for the Chief, bent in a profound salaam, and said, "Sew-sew, sew-sew?"

She made a quaint picture with her uncovered head of glistening black hair tied in a tight knot behind, fastened with two big boxwood skewers, her blue glass earrings, little jacket, wide alpaca trousers, and bare wrinkled yellow feet.

Producing a little stool from her basket, she sat down in a shady corner of the deck and waited.

"But what does she want?" I said.

"Oh, she'll darn, patch, sew on buttons, anything you like. She's a 'sew-sew' woman."

I dived below to fetch my camera; but when she saw it she covered her face, gathered up her things,

looked the picture of misery, and prepared to leave the ship.

"Better not," said the Chief; "she thinks it is the evil eye." So I refrained.

"Belong damfool," said a fat Chinese tailor, who was standing near. "You takee me. All-light. Me likee"; and he smiled an expansive, greasy smile.

But I had no ambition to spoil a plate on a fat Chinaman in a brown puggaree.

"Have you locked up your cabin, Doc.?" said the Mate in passing.

"No," I said.

"By jove, I forgot, too," said the Chief.

He made a hasty stride to the side of the ship and looked over. It was lucky he did. Through his open port, which lay alongside the wharf, a Chinaman had inserted a long rattan with a hook on the end of it; and he was feeling about inside when we looked over. We shouted; and, dropping his rattan, he fled. Down the gangway the Chief and I pelted after him; but we'd never caught him had not a little wiry Malay policeman, who saw him running, skilfully grabbed him by the pigtail and held on till we arrived.

The Chief was very mad. He was out for blood. But when, on the policeman searching the culprit, it was found the man had not had time to fish out anything, he began to cool down again. It was intensely comical to the onlooker. There stood the Chinaman, looking immensely frightened, the fierce little turbaned Malay policeman, in his bare feet, hanging on to the Chinaman's pigtail like grim death, the rather stout,

red-faced Chief, somewhat out of breath, mopping his forehead, covered with beads of perspiration, and myself, standing near, wondering why I had not had the sense to bring my camera and photograph the whole tableau.

The Chief thought rapidly, then he smiled grimly.

"Say, Jack," he said to the policeman. "You give him plenty stick. All right. Can do. You savvy—march."

The policeman's face broke into a broad grin. His eyes snapped with delight. He chuckled in guttural joy.

"I savvy," he said.

He didn't wait to have the order countermanded, for if there is one thing a Malay likes better than another it is beating a Chinaman. So he ran his prisoner off at once; and the last act of the drama we saw was the Chinaman running rapidly, with the Malay clinging to his rear, thwacking him, with immense gusto, all over the body with his malacca truncheon.

After that I locked my door and closed my ports carefully in every port when I was not in my cabin.

We had no cargo for Singapore; and so were only stopping long enough to coal before clearing for Nagasaki, our next port of call. I had no ambition, however, to endure another coaling—Port Said had cured me of that; but so quick were they that before the Second and I were ready to go ashore they had already started; and long strings of Chinese coolies in limpet-shaped hats, carrying great wicker-work coal-baskets, each slung on a bamboo pole, between two of them,

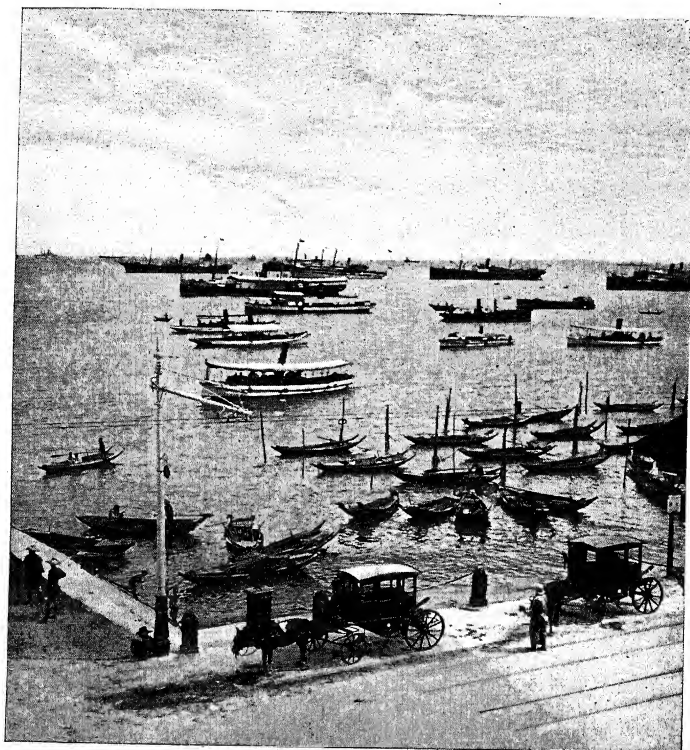
were running in an endless chain up and down the improvised gangways to the bunkers.

It was quite a quarter of an hour's 'rickishaw ride from the wharf to the city. On the way we passed a company of Sikhs, very fine and fierce, gorgeously Oriental, very trim and soldierly. They had been through so much ceremony during the week of the Duke of Connaught's visit that when we came on them suddenly the whole company came to the salute automatically.

"They take you for one of the 'muck-a-mucks,'" I said to the Second. The Second smiled complacently before contradicting me.

Singapore, like all Far Eastern ports, is a kaleidoscopic picture of all the nations upon earth, speaking in a babel of many tongues—pale whites for whom every one makes way, yellow Chinamen, busy as nailers, little Jap ladies smiling in 'rickishaws, stately Parsees in gorgeous silks, grave Arabs clad in white, half-caste ladies, dressed as Europeans, casting languorous glances from exceedingly lustrous dark brown eyes, and over and above all the ever-present, idle, semi-nude Malay, sunning himself in somnolent content. Tramways run all through the city. At first the Chinese rose against them and tore up the permanent way of the big devil engines several times; but now they use them more than any one else.

Looking at the magnificent public buildings, the palatial hotels, the wide, beautifully kept streets, the splendid shops, the gardens and parks, the multitudi-



SINGAPORE HARBOUR.

[Facing page 124.]

nous life of the place, the miles and miles of shipping in the great Tanjong Pagar docks, it is almost impossible to realise that less than a hundred years ago the city was non-existent.

Yet it was founded by Sir Stamford Raffles as late as 1819 in what then appeared the forlorn hope of checking the dominant and domineering power restored to the Dutch in the East Indies by the then recent Treaty of Vienna.

To Raffles the signing of that treaty must have been very bitter. He had seen Java flourish under his *regime*, Malacca, the traditional centre of European power in the Malay States, become British; and visions of a vast East Indian Empire, greater even than that of India itself, must have risen before his mind.

Instead came the agony of seeing everything restored to the Dutch, even islands never before claimed by them handed over in addition, and last of all, and perhaps most bitter, himself, an object of suspicion to the cautious merchants of Leadenhall Street on account of his expansive views of Empire, banished out of harm's way to an honourable exile at Bencoolen, in Sumatra.

It was enough to break the spirit of any but the most strong-willed of men; and it is extraordinary that Raffles, shaken in health as he was by that time, did not give it all up and retire, as he might in all honour have done, to the life of honoured ease which his soul craved for. Had he done so there would have been no Singapore.

The restoration of Malacca to the Dutch came as a

great blow to British prestige in the Far East; and the Dutch were not long in returning to their old aggressive ways. Claims were made of sovereign rights over Pehang and Johore; alleged exclusive treaty rights were advanced which would have been ruinous to British trade; all the old obstructive tactics of the previous two hundred years were employed with a new and startling virulence. A determined attempt was made to drive the British for ever out of the Malay Archipelago. The Governor of Pinang, Colonel Bannerman, wrote despairingly to the Governor-General on the subject. He was a weak man with no initiative, and threw up the sponge even before any attempt to get at close quarters had been made. But the active, impulsive mind of Raffles was not thus to be suppressed. Finding Bannerman worse than useless, with the tacit approval of the Governor-General, he secretly set sail from Pinang with a little fleet of four vessels for an unknown destination. This was the almost uninhabited island of Singapore; and here he raised the British flag before the Dutch had even become aware of his presence. It was the bold act of a master-mind seeing the enormous future before the port, and the vast political power its strategic position, commanding the Straits of Malacco, must inevitably confer on its possessors.

Almost immediately the Dutch, seeing at once the vast importance of its possession, made claim to the sovereign rights of the island, and demanded the withdrawal of the British settlement; and, as might have been expected, the wiseacres in Leadenhall and Down-

ing Streets, looking upon the act as that of an intemperate, aggressive person bent upon embroiling us with the Dutch, sent a despatch severely censuring Raffles, and suggesting to the Governor-General the advisability of withdrawing all support from the scheme.

Luckily the Marquis of Hastings, then Governor-General, was annoyed by the peremptory manner in which Baron Van Der Capellan, the Governor-General of Nederlands Indie, demanded the withdrawal of the British. He knew from Raffles that the Dutch never had had a station there, and was disinclined from every point of view to admit their claim to all the unoccupied islands around the coast of the Malay Peninsula. He refused, therefore, to evacuate the port; and his position was strengthened by the fact that Raffles had been able to get a concession of the island from the Sultan of Johore, who denied the sovereign rights of Holland over any of his territory. Nevertheless it was not until after five long years of constant negotiations that the Dutch claims, so persistently made, were finally repudiated, and the occupancy of the island received official sanction.

Raffles had the highest possible hopes of Singapore. He expected it would become the greatest port in the East, "a great commercial emporium and a fulcrum whence we may extend our influence politically as circumstances may hereafter require." "One free port in these seas," he stated, "must eventually destroy the spell of Dutch monopoly for ever."

History has amply justified him in his prophetic expectations. Singapore has now a population of over

a quarter of a million; and as a port it is the largest in the British Empire after London, Liverpool, and Hong Kong. The trade in 1905 amounted to over six hundred million dollars; and the future is likely to be even more prosperous than the past. As Raffles anticipated, it killed the Dutch monopoly, and established the ascendancy of England in the Malay Peninsula.

Nevertheless so little was his work appreciated by the country he served so well that his last days were embittered by monetary disputes with the Company, and the exact spot of his burial-place is unknown to-day.¹

A bust has now been erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey; and Singapore has honoured herself by raising him a statue. Like many of the world's greatest sons, he is better appreciated now in death than he ever was in life.

Coming along the quays on our way back from the city, we stopped at one of our ships; and while the Second interviewed the engine-room staff, I called upon their doctor, a raw-boned Scotchman of the deepest dye. He said they were going to Rangoon for rice, after leaving Japan.

"That means," said their Third Mate to me, "you'll be sent to Java, Doc. We've taken your turn; and we're the last rice ship this season."

"You may thank your lucky stars you do come after us," said the Scotchman. "We carried the last batch of eight hundred pilgrims back from Mecca; and they

¹ He was buried in Hendon parish church, and a brass plate now commemorates the fact.

brought typhoid on board with them, got from some dirty sacred well. They were carrying lots of the stuff home in bottles with them. It was loaded with germs. When any of them felt seedy he had a swig at his infected bottle; so I had to confiscate the whole lot and dump it overboard. We nearly had a mutiny over it; we should if they hadn't started dying. As it was, we dumped several bodies overboard every day all across the Indian Ocean. I'm thinking I earned my salary this voyage."

"I'd rather have liked the experience of pilgrims," I said.

"Wish you had got them instead of me then," he said heavily.

Our Second appeared in the doorway just then.

"They're hooting for us from the ship, Doc. We'd better scoot."

With a hurried "See you in Japan," we fled. The "Old Man," as usual, was having the fidgets to be off.

Everything was in confusion on the ship; the decks were filthy with coal-dust; the awnings had had to be taken down for the operation; and in consequence the place was like a burning fiery furnace.

"The Chief is as 'waxy' as old nuts," said the Fourth, when we arrived on deck.

"What's up?" we both asked—the idea of the Chief being angry about anything was disturbing.

"Don't know! Some Chinese boarding-master has been up to something; and the Chief don't like it."

"What happened?" said the Second.

"Oh! I went below and found a new 'donkey-man' in charge."

"What thing?" I said.

"Belong new 'donkey-man,' this ship," he answered.

"The devil, you do," said I; "where's our old 'donkey-man'?"

"No savvy," he said in a sort of cheeky way.

"I thought it queer, so I shinned up, mighty quick, to the Chief; and he went along in a rage to the fo'castle, and found our old 'donkey-man' packing up.

"What's the matter, 'Donkey'?" he said.

"Our 'donkey-man' burst into tears.

"My mothah makee sick—makee die, Hong Kong side. No can stop this ship," he said.

"It appears he had had the news that his mother was dying in Hong Kong; and as the ship was not going there this voyage, he wanted to leave."

"What did the Chief do?" I said, with interest, the "donkey-man" being rather a friend of mine.

"Oh, the Chief wouldn't have it. He refused to take the other 'donkey-man,' refused to be re-supplied by any Number One Chinese crimp, and hoofed the new 'donkey-man' ashore. The other fellow has been crying like 'one o'clock' ever since; but he's here still."

"It seems a bit rough," I hazarded.

"Don't know," said the Second. "The Chief's pretty wily. He knows Chinks; and if he thinks there's any hanky-panky, you can bet your boots on it he's got reasons."

I may as well give the sequel now, though it hap-

pened a week later. At first the "donkey-man" was inconsolable; then he got a bit better; and finally he came one day very mysteriously to the Chief when none of the other Chinamen were about.

"My mothah no makee die. No have got mothah," he said.

"What for then you makee talk. Plenty lie. Plenty cry?" said the Chief severely.

And then it all came out. It appeared that he had made enough money to get free of debt to the Chinese crimp at Singapore; and so the crimp wanted to put a new man in his place on the ship, a man who owed him money, so that he could draw his pay. Our "donkey-man" didn't want to leave and started getting into debt again; but all these people are in a secret society of which the crimps are the head, and their power over the men is almost absolute. If the Chief hadn't proved so obstinate, the man couldn't possibly have stayed, no matter how much he might have wished it.

But to resume. It was an intense relief when at length we got clear of the wharf and were steaming out to sea again; for the enervating heat of Singapore, which sits boiling just above the "Line," was now tempered by the breeze we were making; and so it was with feelings of satisfaction we saw the city fade in the opal distance, and heard the "Old Man" give the order altering our course to climb the China Sea.

Even in a few hours the difference was noticeable, for now, instead of the calm silence of the Malacca Strait, we were running through lumpy seas in the

teeth of the N.E. monsoon, and a deck-chair was just a trifle chilly towards midnight.

It was on that first evening I got the Third Mate into deep disgrace. Sitting smoking in his cabin during his watch below, we noticed a German "tramp" making flash signals in the night, and idly began to read them. "Who the devil are you? Who the devil are you? Who the devil are you?" he kept signalling.

In a fatal moment I suggested we should Morse back, for it was evident the signaller was gloriously drunk. The Third Mate jumped at the suggestion; and soon we had rigged an electric light in one of the ports, and by switching on and off found we could signal perfectly. To our acknowledgment the German responded immediately, edging in towards us. We signalled away gaily, and were just in the middle of the enjoyment of saying sarcastic things and getting his enraged flashes in response, when a voice came down the ventilator:

"Captain's compliments, and will whoever is signalling without permission kindly stop."

"Oh, Lord," said the Third Mate.

"What?" I said.

"The 'Old Man' will be as mad as a hatter. I'm done for, Doc."

That put an effectual damper on the fun.

"It was all my fault," I said. "I'll go up to the 'Old Man' and explain."

But the "Old Man" wouldn't listen. He pretended he knew nothing about it, and vented his suppressed rage in bespattering the other ship.

"That d——d German has altered his course four times in the last half-hour. He must be roaring drunk on the bridge. I thought he'd run us down once—d——n him, for a longshore lubber," he said.

When the Mate came off duty he explained it all to me; and it would seem, from his explanations, that we had been guilty of infringing a rule as unalterable as that of the Medes and Persians, namely, that no signals could be sent from any ship without the express orders of the master.

This was all vastly uncomfortable, and distressingly annoying to me. Of course, as far as I was concerned, it did not matter in the least; but for the Third Mate, who was on his trial voyage, it might have far-reaching consequences; and that made it far worse for me than if I had been liable to suffer for it myself. But the Mate couldn't see it:

"It's not your fault, Doc. How were you to know signalling wasn't allowed?"

"But I suggested it."

"Don't care. He knew better, and should have said 'No.' As a matter of fact he's been in hot water several times already this voyage.

"The 'Old Man' is as wily as a fox. He caught him cooking his 'positions' to make them correspond with the Second Mate's observations; and he's been out on deck in the middle watch at night, several times, and swears he saw him asleep on the bridge.

"I don't think he has myself. He's got a slovenly way of leaning over the rail and gazing into space, instead of walking backwards and forwards, that

makes one think him asleep. It's a lazy 'wind-jammer' way he'll have to get out of, if he wants to stay in the company."

All this was very unpleasant. I felt as if I had added the last straw to the weight of the Third Mate's delinquencies, and consequently for the first time felt an unwelcome restraint in the atmosphere of the ship, which the increasing coldness of the temperature, striking on our sun-baked bodies, and the uneasy motion, after a month of calms, did not tend to alleviate. However, in a day or two, the "Old Man" simmered down, and we were all once more a happy family.

But the weather did not improve. We were now in heavy serges again; the decks were constantly wet with spray; there was a dampness and clamminess about everything; and leaks in the caulking overhead began again to show as stains on the roofs of our cabins.

The monsoon was dead in our teeth; and we were making at times barely six knots.

The fifth day out from Singapore was the worst we had. The Chief Steward reported water in the "lazzette"; and on inspection we found that a plate had been started in the night by the pull of the racing screw.

That made the Chief begin to fidget about his gear.

"I must go along and inspect the shaft in the 'tunnel,'" he said. "Like to come, Doc.?"

"I'm on," I said; and so, donning a boiler suit, I followed him along the narrow passage, where the shaft turns unceasingly, night and day.

It was a long straight tunnel, barely four feet high, with not enough room to turn in till one had traversed

its entire length. It lay twenty-five feet below water; and in its floor revolved the long, smoothly polished shaft, connecting the engines with the screw at the extreme end of the ship.

On the integrity of the shaft the life of the ship depends. As every one knows a broken shaft is one of the worst disasters that can happen to a ship at sea.

Crouching with heads bent forward, we went the length of the passage, till we came to the far end, where a little square space permitted us to stand erect. From this an iron ladder, set in a hollow cylinder, led to the poop thirty feet above. The Chief glanced back along the dim-lit tunnel.

"There was once a Second in one of our ships," he said. "For some reason or other he fell foul of one of the Chinamen. Once he struck the man. The Chink said nothing. Then the Second disappeared suddenly one day. So did the Chink. They searched the whole ship, but could not find them. It was the Chief, I think, who remembered he had told the Second to do something in the tunnel. They searched the tunnel—it was a very narrow one—and there they found them. They were both dead. The Chinaman had followed him in, crawling after him with a knife. They had fought it out in the tunnel. Nobody heard. The Chinaman's neck was broken. It wobbled loose when I pulled him out by the feet. I was Fourth then. The Second had been stabbed six times, once in the back and five times in front. How he twisted round in the space after he had been struck the first time, God only knows. I couldn't do it; and I was pretty

thin then, not like now. But he just hated that Chink. I couldn't stand tunnels after that for a bit."

Towards night the weather grew wilder; a high wind rose; and bucketfuls of flying fish delighted the grinning Chinese. In the morning, however, it was almost calm again. The temperature had risen to 80° F.; port-holes could be opened; and it was possible to lounge on deck once more.

The Chinamen seized the opportunity to dry some of their gear; and so, walking along the main deck aft, I saw a lot of stuff spread out on the No. 5 hatch which looked like scraps of leather. On examination, however, it turned out to be bits of maggoty pigskin, which the Chinese cook told me were intended as medicine.

The cook and I were quite friendly now, owing to a curious taste of his. Like most Chinamen, he had tropical ringworm all over his chest. This he was treating with Stephens' blue-black ink; and instead of laughing when I discovered it, I suggested that I had something stronger he might use. Using some carbolic, and mixing up sulphur ointment with the ink, I presented him with the mess. It stung him so much, and looked so nasty, that he was immensely pleased. We became friends for life.

Curiously enough, quite unexpectedly, his ringworm began to improve from that hour; and then the trouble began. They all wanted ink; and the ship's supply soon began to show signs of exhaustion owing to the unexpected demand.

We had continuous bad weather till we passed "Turnabout"; and then in a few hours the change was remarkable. We were now in the Japanese Gulf Stream; and though the sea was still lumpy and yellow, the decks were dry, and the speed of the ship rose to twelve knots. Every one grew suddenly cheerful; and we began to talk of what we were going to buy at Nagasaki. The next day was magnificently fine, after the weather we had been having. Overhead was a blue sky, around us a white-flecked tumbling sea of blue. The air was bracing to an extraordinary degree. In spite of the cold it was wonderfully enjoyable.

We were two hundred miles from the Chinese coast; and yet we passed through a huge fleet of fishing junks, with whole Chinese families, down to little toddling infants, aboard—these junks being their only home. Although it was so cold, the men and women and children were working away almost naked.

Around the ship sea-birds sailed all day majestically. The lamp-trimmer came along as I stood gazing up at them, rifle in hand.

"It ain't worth it, sir. Them birds' skins ain't no good. Now if it wus goin' to Australia we wur, you could catch albatrosses with a fish 'ook."

"Ever heard of the 'Ancient Mariner,' 'Lamps'?" I said.

"No, sir. What company was he in?"

"Can't just remember, 'Lamps.' It was a long time ago."

"Lamps," however, was not curious about the "Ancient Mariner."

"Albatrosses is fine, sir," he continued. "Their breasts make the grandest sort of muff. The missis 'as three or four I made 'er. An' the skin of the web makes a bully baccy-pouch. Yes. Albatrosses is fine; but these 'ere ain't worth the cartridges, sir."

So perished one of my oldest delusions about the superstitions of sailor-men—"Albatrosses is fine."

Early in the "First Dog" it darkened suddenly; black clouds overspread the sky; and night seemed rapidly approaching.

"There's a water-spout on the port bow, sir," said a passing quartermaster, as I was gazing idly out to starboard. I turned round quickly, and saw a dark mass looking like two cones touching by their apices, one rising from the sea, the other descending from a black mass of clouds overhead. It travelled rapidly with the wind across our bows, in a slanting manner, the sea portion, as it were, lagging behind the cloud. It was darkly smoky; and we were hoping the sun would come out and shine on it, as then it turned a beautiful yellow-white, with iridescent edges; but suddenly between us and it, a squall of rain and hail began to fall, and in the darkness beyond it disappeared.

Afterwards in the Java seas I saw many spouts, as it was then the rainy season; but this was my first, and therefore most interesting. Nowadays, when the romance of the sea has dwindled to vanishing point, no one bothers about spouts; but in the olden days, when the mariner went round-eyed from wonder to wonder, and dragons and unicorns abounded, and the kingdom of Prester John was still on the map, sailors had

a great dread of water-spouts, especially when, for lack of wind, they could not get out of their course. Their device then was to fire the ship's cannon at the spout, with the idea of breaking it up; but "I did never hear that it proved to be of any benefit," says Dampier with naïve caution.

The "Sailor's Horn Book" gives an account of several ships that were swamped by spouts in a dead calm; but Dampier's narrative, by its charm, absolutely demands quotation:

"And now being on this subject, I think it not amiss to give you an account of an accident that happened to a ship once on the coast of Guinea some time in or about the year 1674. One Captain Records, of London, bound for the coast of Guinea, in a ship of 200 tons and 16 guns, called the *Blessing*, when he came into latitude 7 or 8 degrees North, he saw several spouts, one of which came directly towards the ship, and he, having no wind to get out of the way of the spout, made ready to receive it by furling his sails. It came on very swift, and broke a little before it reached the ship; making a great noise, and raising the sea round it, as if a great house, or some such thing, had been cast into the sea. The fury of the wind still lasted, and took the ship on the starboard bow with such violence, that it snapt off the boltsprit and foremast, both at once, and blew the ship all along ready to overset it, but the ship did presently right again, and the wind, whirling round, took the ship the second time with the like fury as before, but on the contrary side and was again like to overset her the other way. The

mizenmast felt the fury of this second blast, and was snapt short off, as the fore-mast and boltsprit had been before. The main-mast and maintop-mast received no damage, for the fury of the wind (which was presently over) did not reach them. Three men were in the fore-top when the fore-mast broke, and one on the boltsprit, and fell with them into the sea, but all of them were saved. I had this relation from Mr. John Canby, who was then quarter-master and steward of her; one Abraham Wise was Chief Mate, and Leonard Jeffries Second Mate."

All day there had been an air of busy unrest about the ship. We expected to make Nagasaki on the morrow; and so all over the deck polishing, cleaning, brightening up, was going on to get rid of the ravages of the foul weather we had been having, and to present a ship-shape appearance on going into port.

The engineers were overhauling the deck winches and seeing that everything worked smoothly; the boatswain was carefully testing his tackle, the stewards giving everything an extra rub up. Every one was writing letters to catch the first mail home. Every one was looking forward to hearing from England again. In the morning we should be in Japan.

CHAPTER V

FROM NAGASAKI TO MOJI, AND THROUGH THE INLAND SEA TO KOBE

IT is the fashion to gush about Japan. Everybody does so except the Europeans who live there. It is also customary for people who have been there for a fortnight to write a large book on the subject, just as half a century ago well-meaning persons, who had braved the Dublin crossing and done the Phoenix Park and Killarney, considered themselves qualified to adumbrate in ponderous tomes on the "Present State of Ireland." In the case of Japan the temptation is so immense that, in spite of the best intentions, every one suffering from *cacoethes scribendi* succumbs before it.

I had been hearing of nothing else since we left Singapore. The "Old Man" had been going there for more than thirty-five years. He remembered the two-sworded Samurai. He had seen the nation skip four centuries in twenty years; and his private opinion, publicly expressed many times at mess, was that they were a nation of cheats, and panders, and not to be compared in anything, except cleanliness, with John Chinaman. The Chief's and the Mate's conversation was for smoking-room circulation only; the mate used always to end his yarns with—"But of course I can't now. I'm married."

The Chief Steward's conversation was mainly on china and bronze, ivory and lacquer ware. He had to know about these things, as the major part of his income was derived from commissions from London dealers.

One of the quartermasters, who had been a stevedor's ganger in Yokohama, taught me a lot of colloquial Japanese, for use on shore; and so, long before we got past Aormossa, felt already as if I were familiar with the country.

"Nagasaki in the morning, Doc.," the "Old Man" had said before I turned in; and finding I could not sleep, I had turned up the pages of "*Madame Chrysanthème*," and renewed acquaintance with that faery little butterfly "Kiku" and the more shadowy outline of the "very tall friend."

The morning broke cold and raw, cloudy and with a nipping wind. The coast looked a drear and ragged mass of serrated peaks. This was not the Japan of fancy.

In the heaviest of overcoats, with the collar turned up over my ears, I trudged up and down the deck.

Presently the sun came out, and the hills took on a yellow-chrome colour, verging down to terraced green below; whilst far in the hinterland the snow-capped peaks shone crystalline white, untrodden by the foot of man. Lugger-rigged junks scurried along in the choppy water, under the protection of the shore; but other signs of life there were none.

"When shall we be there?" I said to the Chief, looking at this scene of desolation.

To my surprise he answered: "We're almost there now."

He was right; for presently the ship curled in, and a little white lighthouse, bowered in feathery pines, appeared, round which we swept into smooth land-locked waters. On either side were cone-shaped, pine-clad hills, cut into terraces for cultivation. They looked so very innocent that it was almost a shock to me when the Chief pointed out fresh brown spots on the hills, and my eyes caught the glint of artillery on either side, dominating everything—for Nagasaki is one of the greatest ports of Japan, and is fortified like a Gibraltar.

A half-decked sampan, pushed out from the little jetty underneath the lighthouse, was now approaching us rapidly, rowed by four coolies, standing up, each with a long sweep, while a fifth steered from behind with one equally long.

This was the pilot's boat; and we slowed down for it. A rope ladder was slung over the side; and the little flat-faced pilot climbed quickly on board. On we went along the channel, between high hills on either side. Our ensign flapped in the breeze behind; the flags denoting the ship's name flew from the flying bridge; the yellow "Doctor's" flag was on the fore-mast, that of the company at the main.

Passing close below a precipitous tree-clad island, the scene of a famous Christian massacre in the fifteenth century, we came suddenly upon the harbour itself, and saw the masts of many ships, like trees in a forest, anchored in the bay beyond. Presently a

fussy little steam-launch, flying a red sun on a white-ground, and having a large white "H" painted on its funnel, came alongside. This was the Health Officer's boat; and out of it poured no less than eleven Japanese doctors, in gold-braided uniform, looking like diminutive railway guards. Down went our anchor; and presently all the crew were lined up for inspection—Europeans to starboard, Chinamen to port.

Gravely the senior medical officer counted us to see if all were present, referring to the ship's papers meanwhile. The others scattered round, felt pulses, looked at tongues, and prodded the Chinamen in the groins to see if they had got the plague.

It was all very grave, yet laughable. The senior officer said, "There iss one short, Mr. Mate."

"That's the engineer on duty," said the Chief. "We'll send for him, if you like. Ah, here he comes," as the Fourth appeared, hot and sweating in his boiler suit, from below.

Apparently they were satisfied; and soon, with profound bows they all trooped down the gangway again, got into their launch, and fussed away.

The Chief was grumpy about it: "What the deuce they want so many for, I can't think. And this isn't the last of it. In twenty-four hours we'll be at another port; and it'll be the same all over again. If we reached a third, twelve hours later, it would be the same again. It's European ideas overdone."

"The way those fellows felt pulses showed me that half of them weren't doctors at all," I said.

"I've thought so often," chimed in the Mate.

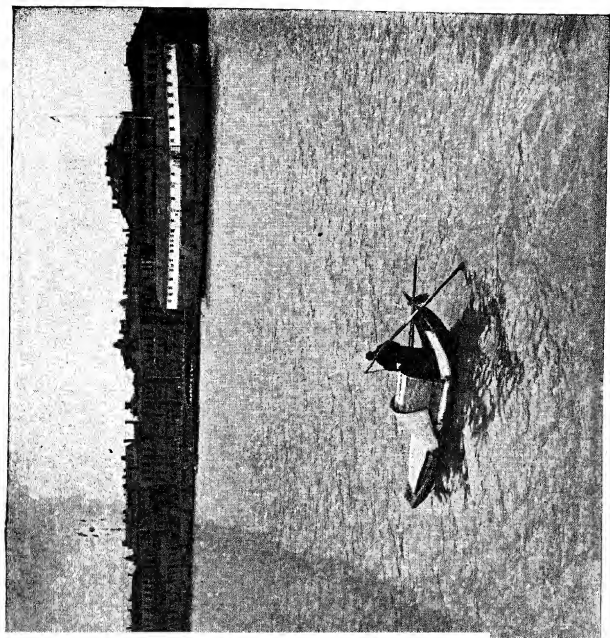


Photo: Dr. Shikany.

CHINESE SAMPAN.

[Facing page 144.]

"Half of them are service men spying on foreign shipping. The Japs are frightfully suspicious since the war, even of a company like ours trading here since the Satsuma rebellion."

"How does the Jap doctor, on his native heath, impress you, Doc.?" said the Chief Steward.

"You remind me, Bruce, of the New York reporters, who meet distinguished foreigners half way up the bay and ask them what they think of America," I said.

As a matter of fact, I had been unfavourably impressed, and so declined to be drawn, feeling the injustice of the prepossession; for the Jap in ill-fitting European clothes is not seen at his best. He is small and sallow, and to our eyes ugly. In his own garments he looks courtly and sphinx-like; he has a priestly air, and somehow or other manages to look taller. But in European clothes he courts comparison with Europeans, and every difference appears as a defect.

That was why I did not feel proud of my brothers of the scalpel; and also why I declined to be drawn by any layman on the subject. Immediately they had gone, down came the yellow doctor's flag; and, almost simultaneously, half a dozen sampans, that had been hovering round till the flag was lowered, hitched on. So whilst the anchor was being raised, and the ship getting under weigh, their owners climbed on board, and began to spread their wares upon the deck—Satsuma, cloisonne, kaga, netsukes, tortoiseshell, ivory, lacquer, and all the thousand-and-one things lumped up by the sailor under the generic title "curios."

Most of the dealers seemed to be well known to the

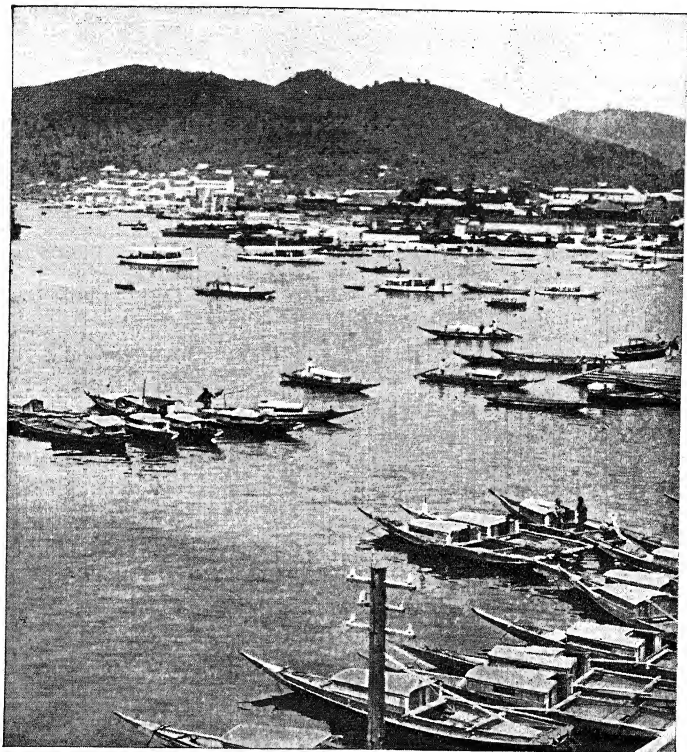
officers. They spread their wares, and squatted, bare-headed, in their kimonos, quietly beside them; nor did they pester one to buy, like the hungry Egyptian or the pertinaciously submissive Hindoo—they were much too dignified for that.

An old lady, bundled in half a dozen kimonos, clattered up in her high wooden pattens, and squatted aft with a basket of monkey-nuts, oranges, cigarettes, tobacco, matches, and other odds and ends. Soon she was doing a roaring trade with the Chinamen, chaffering in infinitesimal fractions of a sen. I bought half a dozen boxes of matches from her, for which I paid one sen (a farthing), and I knew I had been charged 300 per cent. more than they were worth.

Presently we anchored; and soon a regular fleet of lighters, each with its huge bamboo yards and latticed sail, gathered round, and a crowd of Japanese coolies rapidly inundated the ship.

Dressed in trunk hose, with huge cape-like haori coats covered with the heraldic lettering of their guild, they each looked, for all the world, like Hamlet the melancholy Dane. There was an old-world air about them; they might have stepped out of the fifteenth century. All were bare-headed. Many had a fillet of lettered cloth tied round their temples to keep the sweat from running into their eyes as they worked. All wore straw sandals, whose thongs fitted in a special compartment of the sock between the great and second toe.

Soon they had the hatches off; the sound of the steam-winches became all-pervasive; and cargo



NAGASAKI HARBOUR.

was being dumped rapidly into the satellite lighters.

It was a cold raw day, with a suspicion of rain behind the hills. Nagasaki lay spread out on the slope of the mountain before us—a mass of roofs. It is always roofs one sees in a prospect of a Japanese city. The houses are never high, the constant earthquakes making it unsafe to build; and so there are no outstanding buildings, nothing to catch the eye. Everywhere it is roofs with the curious Oriental curving at the eaves one's eye so soon gets accustomed to.

The Japanese seem incapable of rectangularity in thought or design. The outline of the country is irregular to a degree; plains are almost unknown; and the asymmetry of the landscape is reflected in the designs of the people; a vase is never quite plumb, a cup never quite round, every drawing has in it the elements of caricature, every carving the same. A sense of perspective seems foreign to the spirit of the people.

We have learnt from them the beauty of irregularity, the unexpected, the bizarre. Their minds have a twist; and their art reflects it.

Westerners, brought up in the Græco-Roman cult of straight lines, and simple curves of thought, and art, and action, coming to Japan, find themselves brought up short by a new, strange, different atmosphere. Everything they have been carefully trained to think correct is reversed—their entire sense of values is repudiated.

This in itself would not matter. The startling thing is to find that the Japanese are not wrong, that

they are often very, very right, that their line of evolution is as complete as, perhaps even more complete than, our own.

One so readily slips into an inelastic way of thinking there is only one line of progress, that evolution can only occur in one direction, that the discovery of the contrary comes as a distinct mental jar—all of which is very discomposing.

I found the Chief in the "Old Man's" cabin.

"Going ashore, Doc.?" said the "Old Man."

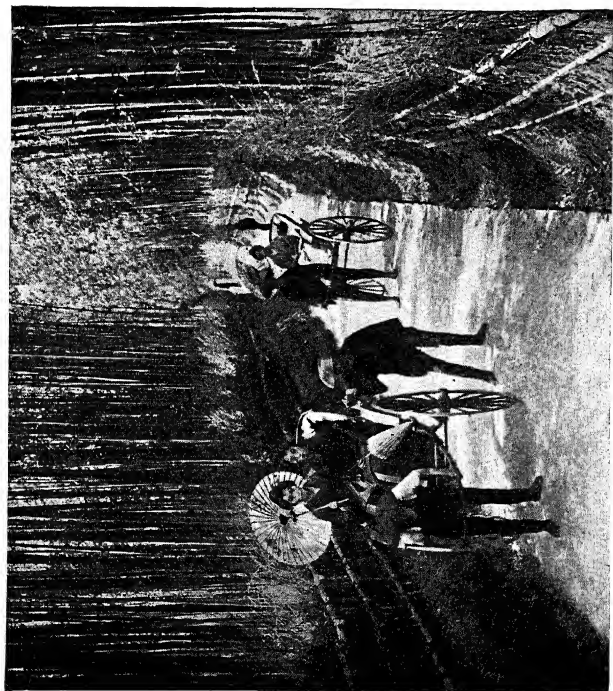
I nodded.

"Well, we can all go together. I shall want you at the Chinese consulate. Mr. Halahan will explain. The launch will be ready in ten minutes."

It seemed that eleven of our firemen were being paid off, their time having expired; and we had to arrange to send them home to Hong Kong. My part was to inspect the new men sent to take their places, and see if they were free from plague, &c.

The Chinamen had already mustered on the deck with their belongings, some wrapped in Macassar mats of variegated straw, others in curious wooden boxes with elaborate locks, others in simple plait baskets. Every one of them, I noticed, had two or more English umbrellas, worth about eighteen-pence each—one old "trimmer" had no less than six, of which he was evidently inordinately proud. Off they went in a couple of sampans, chattering like parrots.

The "Old Man," the Chief, and I followed in the launch to the "hatoba" (landing stage). There was a 'rickshaw-stand just outside on the "Bund"; and



JAPANESE RICKSHAWS.

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soon we three were seated and careering one behind the other along the front. The "Old Man" and the Chief looked immense behind the little wiry men, in limpet-shaped oilskin hats, who were pulling them along at a steady jog-trot of about six miles an hour.

The Jap 'rickishaw men are not to be compared with the Chinese in stamina. Their physique is poor in the extreme. In Singapore a two-seated 'rickishaw is common. Here the Jap cannot pull two Europeans, though he can make shift with two of his own dainty countrywomen with ease.

Once we had transacted our official business the Chief and I left the "Old Man" closeted with the agent, and started sight-seeing. We had two hours to rush round the city; and so we hailed our 'rickishaws and hurried away. Everything was new, everything fresh to me. The curious noise in the streets made by the wooden pattens of the pedestrians, the absence of horses, the constant passage of 'rickishaws with little Japanese ladies, chatting, smiling, dressed like dolls, with hair elaborately coiled and shining, absorbed my attention.

The itinerant merchants with their stock-in-trade slung in two hampers on a bamboo pole, the narrow little streets, the open shops innocent of glass, selling things of which one could not even imagine the use, fascinated me. Everywhere I noticed signs in Japanese and Russian, for Nagasaki contains a large Russian colony—officers captured and sent there during the war, who have taken up permanent abode in Japan and sent

for their wives and children rather than return to Russia.

That they were none too popular we learnt to our cost, after directing our men to take us to a tea-house.

Round a corner they swung, along an alley, and finally drew up before the doorway of a verandahed wooden house. There were four "ricks" at the entrance, but no other sign of life.

In we went to a brick hall, where there was a row of sandals at the bottom of the brick staircase. Up this we went, still seeing no one, till we came to a room on the first floor. The floor was covered with beautiful white tatami matting, scrupulously clean. It seemed a shame to step on it with our heavy boots; but the Chief stumped on.

The walls were of wooden laths, made to slide back if necessary. One side of the room was a framework of glazed paper, acting as a window. There was no furniture except a round table, rising nine inches from the floor, with a square hole in the centre of it.

The Chief clapped his hands—it made one think somehow of the Arabian Nights—and sliding one of the wooden partitions aside, a girl glided in, bowed, and brought us cushions to sit on. Later she returned with a brazier, a square box containing lighted charcoal, which she set in the opening in the little table. Then drawing her kimono coquettishly round her, she sat down opposite us, struck lights for our cigarettes, and accepted one for herself, smiling all the time.

For some reason or other she directed all her conversation to me, smiling continuously; but I could not

make out a word, and finally came to the conclusion she was speaking neither Japanese nor English. The Chief also confessed his inability to make out what she said.

Then an old lady came in, wrinkled, grey, looking like the Witch of Endor, in a kimono. She stared at our muddy boots and looked quite cross. She also spoke to me. I asked for tea for myself and beer for the Chief in Japanese. Then she went away grumbling.

"Something seems to be bothering the old party," said the Chief.

"I think she doesn't like our boots," I said.

"Hang the boots," he retorted.

The little maid had followed the old lady out of the room; and presently she came back with the tea in little handleless cups, a clear straw-coloured fluid, without sugar or milk. The Chief would have none of it. He demanded beer. The little maid looked very subdued. She had ceased to smile. She shrank off from the Chief's side to mine, as if for protection. The old lady brought the beer herself. It was "kirin," a Japanese brand, very clear and agreeable, like light lager. She demanded two yen for it (about four shillings). The Chief was indignant. We both got up and walked out, followed by vituperations from the old hag.

The Chief's face was like a confused thunder-cloud.

"I can't make it out," he said. "I've been coming to this country for eight years now; and it's the first time I've ever been treated like this."

"I'm sure there's some mistake," I said.

My 'rickshaw man knew some English; and I turned to him. The old lady was holding forth on the Chief's iniquities.

"What thing?" I said.

"She say, big fat man belong Russian," he answered.

"What?" said the Chief. "Russians, bedad. So that's it." His face began to clear.

"Here, boy, you say, 'No savvy Russian. Belong English.' "

The boy talked rapidly to the old woman. The other boy explained to me: "She no likee Russian. Him kill two—three her son."

Gradually the old woman was made to understand; and then she was suddenly all penitent. She made us uncomfortable by her abasement, wanted us back, wanted to do all sorts of things for us, apologised in endless circumlocutions.

"Let's get," said the Chief irritably.

So after assuring her it was all right, we climbed into our 'rickshaws hastily, and fled. It was an unpleasant adventure, the only one the Chief had ever had in Japan, where, he said, the foreigner is safer from insult or injury than if he were in any European country, not excepting England.

To soothe his ruffled feelings he insisted on going to an hotel. The hotels in Nagasaki are not good; and everything is very dear. A curiosity about Japanese hotels is that all the responsible people in them—managers, cashiers, head waiters, &c.—are

Chinamen, for the Japanese cannot count properly, having no head for mathematics.

After the Chief had been soothed, we went the round of the shops and curio stores. The Nagasaki shops are famous for Satsuma ware—the province itself is just over the mountains—and tortoiseshell. I was beginning to enjoy myself, bargaining for stuff I did not want, when the Chief looked at his watch. Our quarrel and the “soothing” had taken up more time than we had thought.

“We’ll have to buck. Ship sails at eight; and it’s close to dinner-time now,” he said.

So we had a hurried rush back to the hatoba, where our men, with all the *aplomb* of a London cabby, tried to overcharge us 300 per cent. My Japanese came in useful then. I had a stock of expressions, which I used most effectively. Some of them I did not quite understand; but I had been told they would be useful on occasions such as these. The ‘rickshaw men evidently came to the conclusion we were “residents,” and so not to be fooled like tourists. They dropped two dollars in price, stood grinning as we got into a sampan, and with a courteous “Sayonara” bade us “good-bye.”

When darkness fell we steamed out quietly in the night amongst the islands, through the Tsushima Strait, the scene of the most famous naval battle of modern times. We were bound for Moji, the coal-ing station at the entrance of the Inland Sea.

The navigation here is ticklish; and the “Old Man” stayed on the bridge all night; yet in the morning

he looked just as fresh as if he had just got up.

After breakfast I watched the islands as we passed, and the snow-peaks on the mainland, alternating with brown velvet hills. Approaching Moji, we saw the smoke rising above the hills, concealing the entrance; and then, rounding a pine-clad promontory, we came on a little white lighthouse with a flagstaff.

Up went the ship's flags—the yellow quarantine at the fore, the "House flag" at the main, and the old British ensign floating out behind.

The telegraph rang "half-speed"; and we rounded the corner, to see the roofs of a little village nestling in a tiny bay on the lee-side, climbing up in straggling groups of houses to the terraced land above, with its little temple and steep graveyard, bristling with rectangular tombstones, dominating all.

I had a curious feeling that I had seen it all before, and could not quite think why, till I remembered that in my cabin lay a fan with a picture on it, drawn in a few inimitable strokes, which might have passed as a reproduction of the scene before me. Below, a steam-launch lay at anchor, flying the now familiar blood-red sun-flag of Japan. Down went the star-board anchor, with a rattle of chains, and we were hove-to awaiting permission to proceed.

Presently a sampan put off from the village and drew alongside the launch. Then the launch started for us; and soon we were boarded by the pilot and four gold-braided medicos—only four this time. They all disappeared into the "Old Man's" cabin; and then I suddenly remembered I had forgotten to inspect the

ven new firemen we had taken on the previous day. hen therefore the "Old Man" sent for me, I thought might be necessary to thrown out a bluff about them ould they ask any awkward questions. They were smoking in the "Old Man's" cabin, sitting stiffly their chairs like ladies at an "At Home" who do t know one another well.

The "Old Man" introduced me to the P.M.O., and signed a lot of papers.

"Have a cigar, Doc.?" said the "Old Man."

Now I knew the "Old Man's" cigars. There were eral grades. He kept a job lot of Burmah cheroots, a dollar a hundred, specially for Japanese officials. ey are a little better than the English "tuppenny" vertised as having a "rich, nutty flavour"; and it s these the medicos were smoking.

I said, "Thank you, sir," dodged the open box, and and a fine Havana for myself. The "Old Man's" s twinkled.

It was all very solemn—like a funeral. The M.O. alone could speak English; and his vocabulary s limited.

'Had I been to his beautiful country before?—No. Ah, my visit then should have been later.—The rry-blossom would not be fully out before I left.— s, oh yes; it is very beautiful as it is.—But the rry-blossom——"

Presently we made a movement to the deck, where crew were lined up; but the examination was rely perfunctory. We were not landing—merely ing for coal—so it did not matter.

The "Old Man" and I bowed them off the ship; down came the yellow flag; up came the anchor; and we steamed between the hills into the Shimonoseki Straits.

The mountains ran up high on either side, pine-clad, snow-capped, in the distance. Sleepy little villages met one's eye at every turn. Once we had to make a detour to pass a sunken steamer, hulled by the Russians and chased into port during the war.

Gradually the scenery became less sylvan—a railway track appeared along one shore, and on it American engines were hauling train-loads of coal wagons. Then came huge cement works, with great tall factory chimneys, huddled houses underneath, and a general air of murkiness suggestive of the Potteries.

Soon a perfect forest of masts appeared; and we passed junks of every known rig, tramp steamers, English, American, German, Jap, and Chinese, one of the Canadian Pacific "Empress" boats, looking like a queen amongst the squat merchantmen, and then the trim grey outline of a Japanese cruiser, anchored in the bay. The cruiser dipped to us as we passed; and, at a signal from the "Old Man" on the bridge, we dipped in response to the compliment.

Finally, we reached our moorings, and dropped anchor in the centre of the strait, between Moji, smoky with coal-dust and factories, a parvenu of twenty years, and Shimonoseki on the opposite side, an ancient historic city, with memories of a thousand years behind it.

Shimonoseki looks down upon Moji. Moji

pretends it does not care, and grows larger, wealthier, and more ugly yearly. It was the discovery of coal that made Moji spring suddenly from an insignificant village to a position of rivalry with Shimonoseki; and it was largely for coaling purposes we were there.

An hour after we had anchored one would hardly have recognised the ship, for the curio-dealer was everywhere, and the spick-and-span, comparative loneliness of the decks was confused by a multiplicity of exotic objects and figures.

In one corner three separate Japanese families had forgathered, started a charcoal fire, and were cooking their mid-day meal. It was "Chow" time; and while the men were squatted the women moved about, helping them to tea out of ampulla-like jars, and ladling boiled rice out of firkins. The babies all the while, lolling with nodding heads, slept peacefully, strapped on their mothers' backs. Most of the women were grimy, and had their heads tied up in handkerchiefs to protect their hair, for they were present to assist in coaling the ship.

Japan is a country of striking surprises. One goes there with visions of dainty porcelain-like little ladies; one's first intimate contact with them is when one sees coarse harridans doing the work of navvies loading coal at Moji.

The process of coaling is exceedingly ingenious. All the coal is carried by hand from the lighters to the bunkers in little round wooden baskets, holding perhaps twenty pounds. Nevertheless the number of people working, and the rapidity with which it is

done, makes Moji one of the quickest coaling ports in the world. The method is quite different from that at Port Said or Singapore. From the ship's side a bamboo scaffolding is erected down to the lighters, so arranged that a number of planks, making a staircase, can be laid on it. On each step stands a coolie; and the baskets are passed up in a living chain from the lighters, step by step, to the ship.

At the top the baskets are received by the women, who slide them along a plank, topple their contents into the bunkers, and then throw the empty baskets back again into the lighters.

They were busy at it when we came up from "tiffin"; and I took the opportunity of snapshotting one fat old lady with a baby on her back while the sun was out for a moment. She saw me in the act, and immediately demanded a "comshaw." "Comshaw" in the Far East is as "bakhshish" in Egypt. There is always a "comshaw" in every transaction. If you buy anything you demand "comshaw." The "rick"-man who takes you to a tea-house or curio-store receives a small "comshaw" from the proprietors. When one pays a bill one expects a small "comshaw" for doing so. It is all "comshaw" in the Far East.

I gave the old lady a cigarette as a "comshaw." This she accepted with a smile, immediately going over to the Chief, who was sitting on the hatchcoaming, for a match. Then with a contented air she recommenced the monotonous task of passing, passing,



COALING AT MOJI.

[Facing page 158

passing baskets again. And all the while the baby slept serenely on her back.

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At "tiffin" the "Old Man" had been laying down the law about curios.

"The only thing worth buying here, Doc., is a sort of carved wooden tray. They used to bring them on board; but I haven't seen one for years now."

"I'll try to find some when I go ashore at Shimono-seki this afternoon," I said.

"Don't let them do you in the price," he said.

"They're pretty sure to," chuckled the Chief. "But he'll probably not be able to find the things, if they're so scarce."

Of course that determined me to do my best to find them; and so when I landed at the Shimono-seki hatoba I decided to hunt about on foot, on the chance of finding what I wanted, and let the 'rickshaw-man follow after me.

A coolie hurrying past with a huge bale of rice nearly ran me down. He tacked sideways, hissed, and went on. I was astonished, even the Japanese labourers being credited with fine manners.

All the shops, in the little two-storeyed wooden houses that lined one of the main streets, had open fronts; and the merchants sat cross-legged in them behind their goods, smoking the little Japanese pipe, drinking tea with their families, playing some game like draughts, attending to a stray customer, or totting up their accounts with the aid of the abacus, a square frame with coloured balls on wires, like that used in

schools to teach children to count. Walking along one seemed, as it were, admitted into the whole family life of the community. I stopped opposite one shop where five chests of green tea, of varying degrees of fineness, stood exposed. An old lady sat on the raised floor behind. When I looked at her she hissed just like the coolie, and then bowed. I moved hurriedly away. This was getting distressing. I remembered stories of a sudden hatred of foreigners since the Russian war, remembered that Shimonoseki was the scene of the firing on the Allied fleets, and that a coolie had attempted to assassinate Li Hung Chang in Shimonoseki after the signing of the Chinese treaty. Perhaps Shimonoseki was anti-foreign? My first experience in Nagasaki also had been unfortunate. I began to feel uncomfortably alone. The company's office was a little further along the street; and I went in to get some general directions as to what one should look at. When I told the clerk, who had been to lunch with us on the ship, of my experiences, with the coolie and the old woman, he laughed uproariously.

"Thanks awfully, Doc."

"What?" I said.

"It's the best joke I've heard for a month. Why, man, it's a sign of courtesy to a superior to suck in one's breath like that."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" was all I could say in response.

Certainly things were topsy-turvy in this country. I saw a house being built. The first thing put up was the roof. The carpenters who were sawing wood

below had saws broader at the tip than the handle, exactly the opposite to ours, and sawed towards themselves, instead of away, as we do. The magazines I saw in the book-shops started with a coloured frontispiece on the back of the last page; the letterpress worked also from the last towards the first; the type read from right to left, vertically downwards; and all the "footnotes" were at the top of the page.

I wandered aimlessly about the streets, watching the life of the common people. Everything was strange, everything interesting. The streets were narrow and without footpaths. A covered runnel, which was flushed out every day, ran along both sides, close to the houses. Men with bundles of twigs tied in a "besom" swept the streets. Little boys and girls trotted along on their high pattens, coming back from school, with their books tucked up in the sleeves of their little kimonos. Life seemed very intimate, owing to the constant visions of the interiors one got through the open fronts of the houses. In one shop a barber was shaving the head of a little boy of about six months. His mother held him in her lap, a quaint figure of fun in his little garments, whilst the barber shaved the top of his crown, leaving a fringe around like a priest's tonsure, the baby all the time looking out on the world with round, unthinking eyes, rolling its head about in the purposeless manner of infancy.

Policemen, little men in yachting-caps and swords, swaggered about keeping law and order in a country where there are gaols, imported *en bloc* with to her

European ideas, but no people to put into them.¹ Up and down the streets itinerant hawkers moved with their stock-in-trade slung on a bamboo pole, working a rattle with the unengaged hand to call attention to their wares.

At every street corner, almost, stood a man with a stand on which a charcoal brazier heated a little boiler, the steam of which escaping made a high hissing note. This was an itinerant pipe-mender. Every now and then a curious figure passed, a man with a kind of flageolet, who paused, played a few melancholy sweet notes, and then moved on again. When two or three had passed me I discovered that each was blind; but at the time I could not make out their occupation. Afterwards I learnt they were masseurs—massage is always done by the blind in Japan, and the flute note was their call to those who might require their services. Once or twice I came across houses belonging to the more important people. One particularly struck me. It was surrounded by a courtyard, and had a most elaborately carved dragon gateway, gazing through which I noted that on the wide shallow steps of the verandah six open Chinese umbrellas were spread, betokening the number of visitors within.

While I was looking at them a company of Japanese cavalry on rough little Manchurian ponies passed. It was difficult to believe that these were the men who had beaten the picked troops of Russia,—somehow they looked such light-hearted boys.

¹ A critic in the *Overland China Mail*, commenting on this passage, remarks: "Shades of the prison statistics of Japan defend us!" Probably he is right.

Climbing up a long flight of steps to the parallel street above, I was gazing, pipe in mouth, at the "Torii" at the entrance to a Shinto temple, when three little schoolboys passed me. They stopped, looked at me, and grinned from ear to ear. It was evidently my pipe that amused them; and, smiling back, I let them look at it. The oldest of the three returned it with a solemn elaborate bow; and then they all laughed again, and ran clattering off on their wooden pattens. Every one seemed to be smiling that day, except a solitary priest who stood like a sentinel at the temple gates.

A pathway led from the temple to a little graveyard beyond; and a young girl, washing clothes, had appropriated the two sides to hang them out to dry. Several garments had fallen on the path, blown down by the wind; and so I walked carefully to avoid them. Seeing this, she smiled, and called out something to some one in the house behind. This brought out the old grandmother, holding in her arms a chubby little infant. The old lady bowed to me like a queen; and I felt like a mountebank bowing back in response.

Beyond the graveyard the path led by steps to the street below; and along it two geisha girls, looking like Solomon in all his glory, were picking their steps with dainty feet.

A man turned to stare after them; but apparently they were totally unconscious of his admiration, for they walked on steadily, without a sign of recognition till they came to the corner. Then one of them looked back; but by this time the man had gone.

Coming along the street on the opposite side, a coolie carrying a pile of flour-bags, had placed them in a heap on the ground to rest. A little toddling infant found them there, and immediately proceeded, with much joy, to roll in them, covering himself completely with flour-dust. When I arrived the mother had just become aware of what was happening, and had rushed to the child, taken him in her arms, and started reviling the chuckling coolie. The child was taking absolutely no notice of the mother, but instead was crowing joyously at the coolie—a ragged, bare-legged person with an exceedingly humorous face, who was snapping his fingers for the child's amusement, making weird grimaces, and all the while carrying on a wordy warfare with the mother. His retorts must have been immensely amusing, for all the onlookers were kinking with laughter, and the mother looked very discomposed. At length, finding the contest too hot for her, carrying the infant upside down, she fled incontinently, followed by a volley of laughter from the onlooking crowd.

By this time I had begun to get a general idea of the topography, for I had discovered that most of the streets lay parallel with one another on the side of the mountain, and were connected at intervals by cross flights of stone steps.

All the time I was wandering aimlessly, looking at odd-looking temples, queer signs, or anything strange in the shops, I was thinking about my wooden trays, watching for them and never finding them; and so it was quite an unexpected delight when, turning into

what appeared a *cul-de-sac*, I came upon a wood-carver, squatting on the dais of his open workshop with his tools around him, and caught him in the act of making the very things I wanted. He could speak no English; but he was most polite. He motioned me with an arm-wave to ransack his stock-in-trade of carved things, while he went on steadily at his work. When he saw I had lit on what I wanted he stopped, got up, and came over. I had selected a nest of five, carved with a design of a temple in some thirty masterly strokes.

I asked him how much he wanted for them; and he took out coins, laid them in order, and showed me what he required.

It seemed so ridiculously little I paid it on the spot. He looked so dignified, and was so evidently an artist to his finger-tips, that it seemed like a disparagement of his work attempting to chaffer.

I called my "'rick"-man and placed them in the "kuruma"; and then, feeling I had done what I came out for, let myself luxuriate, trundling aimlessly around the city at the "kurumaya's" fancy.

In one of the streets we passed a detachment of infantry, the men walking hand in hand like school-children; and again I found it difficult to imagine those happy-looking boys could have been through the grim struggle of Port Arthur.

Passing the soldiers, and swinging round a corner, we nearly ran into a curious procession. It was some sort of "service." There were kimonoed women with *samisens* and *biwas* playing, and a man in a semi-

military uniform talking to the people. They had a flag. I recognised that. It was our old friend the Salvation Army flag. I regret to say I laughed. It was all so unexpectedly incongruous. Yet any one who knows Japan, and what the Salvation Army has done for the women of Japan, feels that their work can certainly not be laughed at.

I had brought my camera ashore with me, and taken several snapshots as I went around the city. Now I fetched it from the 'rickishaw to snap the Army meeting. It was the last plate I had.

Immediately I found myself in trouble. More troops were passing at the time. A Japanese officer looked at me, saw what I was doing, and before I knew what was happening I was under arrest. I looked around, and every face was hostile. Even the 'rickishaw man glared at me stonily.

The officer pointed to my camera. A soldier stretched out his hand towards it; but I held on. The officer waved him back, and then in peremptory tones, though I could not understand a word he said, gave me to understand I was to march straight ahead.

Apparently I was being taken to gaol.

For the life of me, I could not make out what was the matter; and that made me all the more uncomfortable. But I evidently had to march, and that pretty quickly. We went along the street, two men in front, two behind me, a crowd following, and my 'rickishaw man, who hadn't been paid, in the rear.

Turning a corner, I recognised the shop where the old lady had hissed at me, and knew the agent's office

was near. I was lucky. The identical clerk who had laughed at me was coming out of the office. I beckoned with my hand; and he came quickly forward. The officer evidently knew him, and allowed him to speak to me.

"What on earth's the row?" he said.

"Dashed if I know."

He saw the camera in my hand, and immediately said, "You haven't been fool enough to be taking photos, have you?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"Oh Lord! Man, this place is fortified no end. They're as suspicious as old maids; and no one is allowed, under any pretext, to take photos near fortified places."

"I've been snapping all over the place," I said in despair. "I suppose they'll smash my camera, and give the company no end of trouble clearing me."

"It's the devil of a mess. I'll do my best to explain; but, dash it all, there's a big notice on the hatoba against it," he said.

"Very likely. Never saw it, though."

He turned to the officer and explained volubly, but apparently with very little effect.

"I'm afraid it's not much good," he said.

I was beginning to think things might be becoming serious, when a Japanese gentleman, who was passing, and had had to get out of his 'rickshaw on account of the crowd, stared at me, smiled suddenly, came forward, and held out his hand.

I had not the faintest idea who he was; but he

knew me, pronounced my name, and was evidently a friend. I shook hands with him as if he had been my long-lost brother. The officer evidently knew him also; he saluted gravely. The agent's clerk knew him; and seized the opportunity of asking us all into the office. In a few minutes the whole complexion of things was altered. They talked away about it in the office; and all the time I was puzzling my brain trying to make out my unknown friend's identity.

Presently they announced their solution. He had been talking away the officer's suspicions; and they had mutually agreed that my camera was to be taken, the plates developed, any not approved of destroyed, and the rest returned to me on the morrow.

"We sail this evening," I said. "Can't I have them then?"

But to this the officer could not agree. The agent, however, promised to send the camera on to Kobe, if we sailed before it arrived; and so it was settled.

We went down again into the street. My 'rickishaw man, now all smiles, pushed forward through the crowd, which quickly dispersed; and my friend's man did the same.

"I haven't seen you since the old days at 'King's' years ago. Whatever brings you here?" he said.

And then I remembered a little Japanese student, whom no one took much notice of, working away laboriously at a dissection of the "middle ear," to whom I had one day, in a good-natured moment, given a demonstration on some point he did not quite understand. Afterwards he had got into the habit of

coming to me in a difficulty; and I had always done my best to explain. I had forgotten all about him; but now it all came back.

The agent's clerk said, "You're lucky to have got out of it so well, Doc."

I thought so too, myself, and said so as I thanked him for his help.

"But what's my friend's name? I'm ashamed to say I don't know it."

"You make me laugh," he said. "Why, it's Dr. Tomatoda, the Principal Medical Officer in charge of troops here."

"Right. I've got it now; thanks."

I went to thank him and say good-bye before directing my man to take me to the hatoba; but he was not to be shaken off so lightly.

He had got it into his head that I would have a poor impression of the Japanese after my experience, and was most apologetic for the bother I had had. He insisted, therefore, that I should go back with him to his own home and drink tea with him; he would have no denial.

So we were soon stringing out, his 'rickshaw man in front; and in a few minutes we arrived in front of a Japanese house of the better sort. A perfect little flower of a maid came running out into the piazza, and pulled off our boots. His were elastic-sided. Previously I had noticed that most Japanese in European costume wore elastic-sided boots, and had wondered why, for somehow in England one associates them with the Nonconformist conscience.

Watching her struggling to unlace mine, I soon saw their convenience in a country like Japan. I tried to assist; but she would not let me. Eventually, however, between us we got them off; and I followed my host through a sliding screen he had pushed aside into the house, feeling very queer indeed going to pay a formal call in stockinged feet. We came into a room quite bare of furniture, covered with tatami matting fitting in squares. It was empty.

"My father would have nothing European in the home," he said.

"And a good thing, too," I answered quickly.

"You think so really?" he said in surprise.

"I'm sure of it," I answered sincerely.

I was pleased he did not ask me why; because I should have had to explain that the Japanese, though they have such exquisite taste in everything pertaining to their own methods of living and furnishing, when they begin to copy European models, seem to lose all their good taste, and manage to imitate the very worst traits of the models, missing the best completely. As a consequence houses built and furnished in Japan on European lines are inimitable examples of how not to do it.

Pushing aside a leaf of the partition, we came into a room at the back of the house, looking on to a garden, with a little pond, a bridge over it, and a quaint little shrine beyond, placed on the ridge of a miniature mountain, green with very small, but exceedingly old-looking, gnarled matsu trees.

Turning my eyes back to the room, I saw that in a

recess a gaily painted scroll hung down, and at its base was a vase with a single sprig of cherry-blossom. A few bright-coloured cushions lay on the matted floor. There was no other furniture.

Presently two girls, in red-trimmed, modified kimonos, with their hair in pigtails, came into the room. They were sisters; and the costume, I afterwards understood, was that prescribed for "high-school" girls.

They bowed profoundly to their brother and me, and then ambled round in their little white "tabi" (one-toed socks), finding cushions for us to sit on, smiling all the time, and waiting on us hand and foot.

They were introduced to me as "My sisters, Hana and Kiku," very graceful, clear-eyed little girls, very dimpled and smiling. They looked exactly like skilfully made dolls.

"They will want to speak English with you very much. They learn it at school. Will you be graciously pleased?" he said gravely.

I was "graciously pleased." I felt somehow as if I were acting in a Gilbertian opera, and took it all quite seriously.

Once or twice I felt like protesting, remembering they were ladies, whilst they were looking after my comfort, bringing the "tabakabon"—a brazier for smoking—lighting my cigarette for me, drawing screens to shut off the draught from me. Afterwards I was glad I did not; as it is counted the height of rudeness for any Japanese lady to delegate to servants any small personal attentions necessary to the com-

fort of her male relations and their honoured guests.

The little maid I had first seen brought in tea. It was served by Hana in the usual tiny cups without handles, and was the usual straw-coloured fluid I was now beginning to like.

Presently their tongues loosened; and they plied me with questions. I wish I could repeat the quaintness of their English. They asked me many things—often the most awkward things—with the most innocent round, inquiring eyes:

Was I married? . . . No. Then who looked after the comfort of my honourable father and mother, since I had no wife? Was it true that in England only one wife was allowed, and no Mekake? (a Mekake is a sort of left-handed morganatic wife). When I told them that was so, they thought it rather nice; but they were evidently horrified to think that I had left my father and mother to the care of strangers while I was far away from home. Was it true that English ladies wore no clothes above the waist in the evenings?—they had seen pictures of evening dress—and was it true that they allowed men they hardly knew to put their arms round their waists? (this was at dances). Their brother had told them so; but they were difficult to persuade of its truth.

I had to confess it was more or less true; and I am afraid they were shocked again.

I think they must have been catechizing me for over an hour. Time flew rapidly; and it was with regret I tore myself away from their fascinating little presences. But the day was flying; and I had

been warned to be back at the ship before dinner. I made as ceremonious an exit as I could, feeling boorishly awkward beside these polished bowing little ladies.

Dr. Tomatoda insisted on seeing me to the hatoba, got me a sampan, instructed the man where to take me, and reiterated warmly his invitation to look him up again when the ship came back after leaving Yokohama. With a pleasant feeling that my afternoon had been well spent, I climbed up the gangway to the deck above, carrying my precious wooden trays under my arm.

On the way to the ship I began to fear I had been done over the price, remembering I had made no bargain. So when I got on deck I stealthily hid them under my coat, and slunk down to my cabin to get rid of them.

Coaling was still going on; and, coming on deck again, I was hailed by the Chief.

"D'ye remember about those trays?" he said. "Well, funny thing, just after you had gone a dealer brought some on board. I bought one, a beauty, and was going to get one for you too; but I thought I'd wait, though I didn't think you'd be able to find any ashore."

"I got some," I said.

"You did, did you? Hope they haven't diddled you, Doc."

"Let's see yours," I said hastily, to change the subject.

Nothing loth, he took me below. It certainly was

a beauty—the same size as the largest of mine, and with the same design on it.

He was immensely pleased. He had paid one-third of what had been asked.

"How much?" I said. He told me.

"They can't diddle me," he said. "I've been coming too long to the country for that."

I am afraid I laughed in his face. It was partly the relief of it; for I had paid just one and a half the price of his one for my five. When I told him he refused to believe me; but on my affirming again positively, he said, finally, with a crestfallen air, "Well, I'm jiggered! I'll never give you advice about prices again, Doc."

And he never did. On the contrary, he came to me. I had established my reputation as a bargainer. The thought of it makes me laugh still.

At "one bell," just before dinner, a little Jap came up the gangway. I had got out of mufti, and was standing in uniform at the companion hatch. He made a bee-line for me, drew himself up, saluted, and then said in an explosive voice, "I am the post-office."

It was evidently a sentence he had learnt off by heart; he had probably been repeating it all the way out in the sampan; and now he shot it rapidly at me before he should forget.

At the same time he thrust a long blue document at me; I looked at it, found it was a telegram for the captain, and so directed the "post-office" to his cabin.

Its receipt evidently put the "Old Man" in a bad temper. All the way up from Singapore he had been

talking of a great friend of his, a Captain Outram, one of the pilots of the Inland Sea. At Nagasaki he had wired for him to take the ship through the narrows to Kobe; and this wire in reply was to say he could not come.

The Inland Sea is rather a difficult piece of navigation; and all ships have to carry pilots according to Japanese Government regulations. Most of the pilots are European; but an increasing number of Japanese qualify for the posts yearly, and in a decade will have supplanted the "foreigners" altogether; for as the older pilots die out they are replaced by natives, the Japanese wishing to keep the pilotage of their own waters in their own hands.

After dinner, however, another wire came, saying that if we did not start before 10 A.M. Outram could get to us in time to take us through.

"I'll wait," said the "Old Man." "He's the only pilot I care to have on my ship."

"We won't have finished coaling before six in the morning," said the Chief.

"That's all right, then," said the "Old Man."

Finding we were not to start that night, I had some thoughts of going ashore again; but the "Old Man" dissuaded me.

"Certainly, Doc., you can go if you like. But if you take my advice you won't. It's very risky. There's a nine-knot current in these Straits; and a doctor was drowned here a few voyages ago coming back in a sampan."

It was a cold raw night; there were no sampans

about; nobody else wanted to go ashore; and the "Old Man's" lugubrious yarn daunted me. Afterwards I found it was the same tale at every port. Apparently doctors were in the habit of getting drowned at ports, always the port we were in at the time. The Mate said it was more or less true. Doctors were clumsy coming aboard in bad weather in the dark; they could not manage with the sailor's sure-footedness; sampan-men will never make the slightest effort to save a drowning man, because they have a superstition that thereby they acquire all the sins he has committed; and so several doctors actually had been drowned close to their ships.

"But of course what the 'Old Man' wants, though he is too clever to say so, is to have you handy in case of an accident. Accidents don't happen much at sea, where the doctor is always available; they happen in ports, the only place where cargo is being handled, and usually occur when the one man who knows how to tackle them is ashore sight-seeing. That's why the 'Old Man' spins 'cuffers' at you."

"The 'Old Man's' as wily as a fox," said the Chief. "He has to be to keep his end up."

"He's euchred the Doc. all right this time," said the Second. "Never mind, Doc. We want a fourth at bridge. Come along."

After breakfast next morning there were two people discomposed on the ship. One was the "Old Man"—it was nine o'clock, and no Captain Outram had arrived—I was the other—no camera and no plates

had appeared. I had kept my adventure with the camera to myself, and asked the agent to do likewise, knowing I should be the object of ponderous jokes all the rest of the voyage should it leak out. So I did not care to appear to be watching for anything; yet I could not help continually squinting towards the Shimono-seki side. The "Blue Peter" was flying at the fore; the coal was all in; the scaffolding and lighters gone; the curio-dealers were packing up their wares, the bo'sun and his men beginning to clear the decks of the accumulated coal-dust; steam was up, and everything was in the uneasy state of imminent departure. Still there was nothing from the shore. At last, mindful of the watched kettle proverb, I decided not to look any more; and it was then when I had gone below to see a Chinaman, and the "Old Man" had ambled for'ard to look at something in the fo'castle, that the white launch ran alongside, put our pilot aboard, and with him my precious camera and two plates—two out of a dozen. Apparently I had been photographing all the places I ought not; but I was so relieved to see my Kodak again that even the loss of ten plates seemed trivial in comparison.

In a few minutes all was bustle. The telegraph rang sharply; up came the anchor; and the sound of churning water caused a stampede amongst the curio-men. Down the gangway they scuttled to their dragging sampans, cast off, and were soon dancing specks behind.

The shore slipped past us like a panorama. In through a narrow neck we steamed, between cliffs

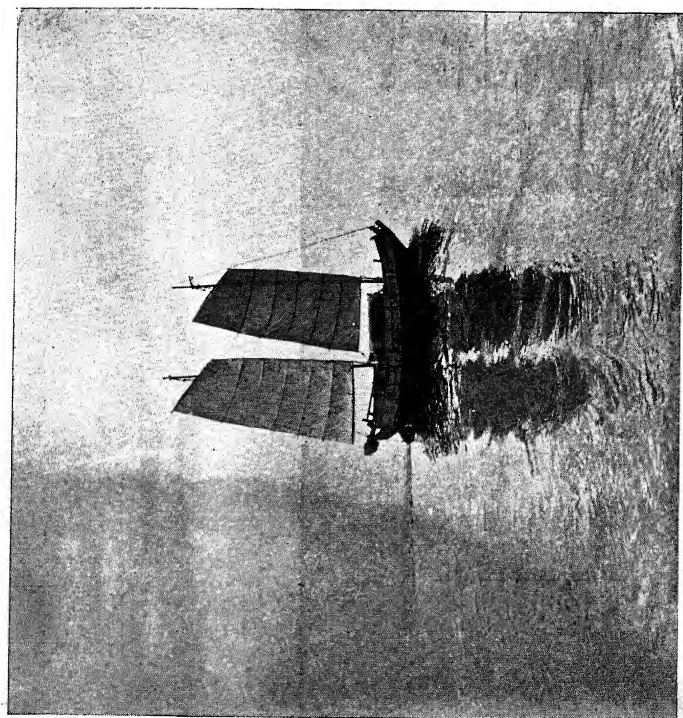
honeycombed with guns; and in a moment we were in the Inland Sea beyond. An upturned Jap steamer, lying on a sandbank a total loss, showed how careful one had to be in this treacherous channel, and made me appreciate why the "Old Man" had been so keen to wait for his friend Captain Outram.

The Inland Sea is an immense stretch of water between the middle and the two lower islands (Kyushu and Shikoku), about 200 miles long, studded with hundreds of little islands, through which one's vessel winds a devious way, past people and villages forgotten through the ages.

It is nevertheless one of the most frequented waterways in the world; and as we steamed through at full speed we passed every style of craft afloat, from the mediæval junk to "square" and "fore-and-aft" rigged sailing ships of the latest type, from little tin-pot "tramp" steamers to the lordliest of all ships seen in Eastern waters—the beautiful "Empress" boats of the "C.P.R."

In the summer the islands are said to be of the most entrancing tropical loveliness; but as we saw them then, bare and wind-swept, with snow-clad mountain-peaks sinking into a pearly haze behind, they looked more like the Outer Hebrides than anything I had ever seen elsewhere; and as the little Gaelic quartermaster said to me in a voice of pride, "They're naw in it, sir, wie the Kyles o' Bute."

After "tiffin" I came across Captain Outram strut-



ting about the deck. We were now in open waters; and he had taken the opportunity to leave the bridge for a spell.

"No," he said in the course of conversation, "I have no use for the Japanese. Lived with them twenty years and like them less each year. There's an old saying about Japan that what it lacks are:

'Men of honour,
Women of virtue,
Birds that sing,
Flowers that smell.'

The man that said that must have been a sailor, for he's all wrong about the last two. But the first part's right. It makes me sick to hear the 'P. & O.-ist' talking frothy nonsense about advancement, culture, civilisation—the mission of Japan. It's all tommy-rot. The reason Europe respects Japan is because she has learnt all the latest scientific ways of killing, and can hold her own at the game. Between ourselves, the Japanese hold us all in contempt as barbarians. They use us because they want to learn certain useful things from us; and as soon as they've mastered it they throw us aside. 'Japan for the Japanese' is the cry now; and people like us, who have had them in leading-strings, have got to quit. They've learnt all we can teach them. The Jap is an Oriental to the core, and don't you forget it."

"Ever been in Korea, Doc.?" he said.

"No," I answered.

"Well, perhaps your ship will call there on the way.

home. If it does, you'll see how a brave, cultured people without the military spirit, get treated by the Japs when they have a free hand. It's the Oriental at his worst."

He was snapping the triggers of a breech-loader as he spoke. His eyes twinkled.

"There's a 60 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on this; but I don't think it's going to be asked for, eh, Cap.?"

"Oh, no. It's your gun, and of course you take it ashore with you," the "Old Man" said solemnly. "The Doc.'s a good shot," he added parenthetically.

"So. Well, if you'd care to come, Doc., we're going duck-shooting in Osaka Bay the day after tomorrow."

"I'll come if you'll lend me the tools," I said emphatically.

"That'll be all right. We've got loads."

"The most difficult bit of navigation in the Inland Sea is about midnight," said the "Old Man" at dinner. "We pass through the narrows then. It's about a cable length across. Like to be called, Doc.?"

"Please," I said.

So at "one bell" they called me. It was pitch-dark, so dark that even the water was barely visible. Away in front, a point on the starboard bow, a light glimmered low down, growing steadily larger and brighter as we approached. The water, formerly quiet, seemed now to have acquired a running sound, which grew momentarily more and more intense. One could feel that the ship was moving at tremendous speed in the

unseen current. Sound echoed cavernously from the precipitous cliffs that were narrowing around us, unseen in the darkness.

Suddenly a hoarse order came from the bridge; and, with a swirl, the great ship half turned in her course, throwing me bodily against the rail.

Another light appeared. Again the order echoed in the cavernous night; again we canted; and now a third light flashed in evidence. Then came a slackening; the sound of waters died; the darkness grew less intense; and the faint glimmer of open water appeared. We were through.

On the bridge the quartermaster struck "eight bells." Ere the brazen sound had died it was repeated from the fo'castle head. Then the voice of the "look-out" came clear and melancholy through the night:

"A-a-ll's well. Lights burning brightly."

A dim figure leant over the bridge rail.

"You there, Doc.?"

"Yes."

"Come up, and look at the chart."

CHAPTER VI

KOBE, YOKOHAMA, TOKYO. GOOD-BYE TO JAPAN

IN the morning we arrived at Kobe, one of the greatest of the Treaty Ports.

A martello tower and a white quarantine ship marked the outer boundaries of the harbour. Here we were boarded by the doctors—two of them this time; and I noticed that the nearer we got to Yokohama the better-looking they were, and the better-fitting their uniforms.

Once the yellow flag came down we made all speed to our anchorage, one of a line of big white buoys about a mile from the shore. One of our company's ships was just leaving harbour; and two others had the "Blue Peter" flying, indicating they were due to start within twenty-four hours.

It was late in the afternoon before any of us could arrange to get ashore; but time did not hang heavily on our hands, as the curio-men were everywhere, spreading their wares all over the ship, and squatting with Oriental calm beside them ready to bargain with any one. They asked, of course, enormous prices at starting, prices such as one would have to pay in London, but evidently only as a method of commencing business. They expected to be offered one-sixth; and then the real bargaining began.

At one's offer they would throw up their hands in

impotent protest, and repeat their first price. At this point one shrugged one's shoulders and left. Then they would call one back, protesting at the absurdity of one's offer, smiling, or looking gravely hurt at the disparagement suggested by the would-be buyer's price. A fresh offer, twenty-five per cent. less, would be made; and this one parried by again repeating the previous offer.

With a sad look the curio-man now washed his hands of one.

Half an hour later he would say, when one happened to come round his way, "How much you give?"

And then one began to increase one's offer. The stewards, quartermasters, and A.B.'s were bargaining off and on all day. They had little or no opportunity of getting ashore, and so all their purchasing had to be done on the ship. Most of the things they bought were resold to the Liverpool ship at a profit of 100 per cent.; and a considerable part of their income was thus derived. Consequently they were experts at bargaining, sometimes taking two or three days haggling over something special. The dealers knew them, of course, and also the futility of attempting to overreach them. So they were able to make on the average much better bargains, for small things, than the officers, who had neither the time nor the patience for this interminable chaffering.

The Second Steward said to me, "If you see anything you fancy, sir, tell me, and I'll get it for you a good deal cheaper than you can."

In the afternoon the Chief and I, our pockets stuffed

with rolls of paper money, hailed a sampan to take us to the hatoba.

A cloud of "kurumayas" (" 'rick"-men) pounced on us as we landed. We picked out two, and told them to follow us till we wanted them. Then we strolled leisurely along the streets.

Kobe, like every Japanese port, is the oldest mixture of periods. Mediæval houses stand overshadowed by tall telegraph poles; open-fronted shops with beautiful bronzes, china jars and vases, lacquers and enamels, stand next to glass-fronted ones filled with European rubbish of the 6½*d.* bazaar type; bare-legged peasants clad in garments of rice straw rub shoulders with policemen dressed like *gendarmes*; dainty little women garbed like butterflies, solemn robed Buddhist priests, ordinary citizens, bare-headed, kimono-clad, and men dressed in "complete-suit-one-guinea" European slops mingled in the kaleidoscopic crowd.

There are two sights Europeans go to see in Kobe: one is the so-called Temple of the Moon (Tanjoji), and the other is the Nunobiki Falls. The temple is beyond the falls, further up the mountain; and the Chief suggested we should see them both that afternoon.

So we mounted our 'rickishaws; and away our men rattled at a long swinging trot, past hotels, temples, over a railway line, through street after street of wooden houses one or two storeys high, till at last we came to the halting place, at the foot of the hills.

Here we got out, 'rickishaws being no longer of any use, and started to climb. All the way, however, the Chief's athletic fervour had been evaporating. He

was not at all so enthusiastic about the climb, when we were at the bottom of the hill, as he had been when proposing it; and he now suggested we should do the waterfall, and leave the temple till another day.

Perhaps it was the natural cooling after ardour, perhaps the thought of the two hours' climb, that made him suggest the shorter journey only. Or perhaps it was the pretty face of "Sono-San," the little tea-house girl, standing bowing in the doorway of the "chaya" opposite, and saying with a quaintly piquant accent, "Peese come inside," that made him disinclined to move.

At any rate he looked at her, and then at me.

"Let's go in. We've lots of time," he said. "I feel thirsty."

So it is not surprising that in a few minutes we found ourselves squatting on cushions, warming our hands over the charcoal "hibachi" (brazier), chatting with our hostess and the almond-eyed little lady who had first enticed us in, drinking the inevitable straw-coloured tea, and watching the dexterous way the little ladies handle their cigarettes, smiling at us with their slanting eyes the while.

So much has been written about the Japanese woman that the subject is almost worn threadbare. She has been praised extravagantly; she has been as vehemently abused. She has been acted in opera, sung about in musical comedy, portrayed in every form of decorative art. One cannot get away from her—her presence is so all-pervasive in her own country. Every time one buys a fan or a piece of china she is there.

Her presence sends a ray of sunshine into every street; her costume insistently catches the eye. It is impossible to avoid her. As a rule one doesn't try to; for the Japanese woman is the greatest thing in Japan. Her beauty is of a difference—it grows on one day by day; and the longer one stays in the country the more one admires it. Men who have lived there tell me that it slowly permeates till one wakes up suddenly to find some day that the high aquiline Caucasian type has become distasteful to one, when by chance one meets an unknown fellow-countrywoman in the streets of a Japanese city.

She is so dainty, so fine-lined, so small, so very gorgeous in her dress, so very artificial in her headgear bristling with pins; her smile is so ever-ready, her temper so equable, it is difficult to believe she can be really alive, could ever look cross, or be untidy.

She is inimitable, the apotheosis of Japanese civilisation. There is nothing in Europe at all like her. But there are rumours she is being spoiled by Western ideas, freed from the thralldom of "The Greater Learning for Women." It is stated that girls educated in the missionary schools can be readily distinguished by their awkward gestures, and want of graciousness, from those trained under the old *régime*. If that be so, the schools have a lot to answer for. It has been whispered, with bated breath, that the "suffragette" has raised her head in Japan. *Absit omen*. What may suit Europe bears transplantation to Japan very badly. At present the Japanese woman is perfect. It seems an unnecessary risk to try to paint the lily.

We climbed up to the lower waterfall in the cool of the afternoon. At the inevitable tea-house at the top the old lady who acted as hostess greeted the Chief as an old friend, and talked the queerest of slang English to him. One of the musumes sang an English song for our edification. Wonderful to relate, it was no less than "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," and sounded like a dim echo through the centuries. There was one of the tea-house girls particularly pretty, who after our arrival kept persistently in the background. When we entered she had looked up quickly at us for a moment, and then returned to her occupation again. Apparently she was trying to tie knots in a strip of white paper with her thumb and little finger—a somewhat difficult feat. The little musume looking after our particular wants saw my eyes following her, and pouted.

"She no your girl. What for you look?"

"I want to know what thing. What for she tie paper so?"

Hari laughed, and then explained: "You no savvy that. She belong sick. Have got Inglee-ish man lover no come."

"What for he no come?"

"No savvy. His ship come. He no come."

"What for she tie knot, so?"

Hari twirled her long taper fingers in imitation of the other and laughed.

"She tie knot so—bring lover back."

Afterwards I had it all explained to me. It was a charm to bring back an absent lover. The knot tied in

the prescribed way was taken to the shrine of the Love God, in the Temple of Kwannon, Goddess of the Unhappy, and placed before the image by the forlorn maiden. A prayer was then said, a small offering made, and the influence of the incantation patiently awaited. Should it be successful, the maiden then presented a gaudy picture, purporting to be that of the object of her affections, to the temple, and all was well.

"I don't believe for a moment that any Japanese woman ever falls in love with a white man," said the Chief on the way down. "Our features seem hideous to them. These girls smile at us for the sake of trade; but they're really saving the money for some shock-headed, cadaverous little Jap round the corner, who is their ideal of manly beauty."

"You think so?" I said thoughtfully.

"Sure of it," he answered. "Can you imagine an Englishwoman ever falling in love with a Jap? You know you can't," he added triumphantly. "Well, then, reverse the picture."

I had told him of the girl above; and I said, "So you think this girl——"

"Tommy-rot," he answered positively. "Hari was bluffing you, and your head is full of 'The Geisha.'"

Our "kurumayas" gave us a wide-grinned welcome when we got to the bottom again; and soon we were bowling along the little narrow streets once more. Turning a corner, we came on the following notice in English: "Satsuma factory. Visitors are respec-

tably invited to inspect the factory." We laughed, though we could not have made anything like as good a sentence in Japanese.

A very obsequious proprietor took us round. He explained that the china itself was made in the province of Satsuma by a secret process known only there to a few, but it was painted in Kobe, Yokohama, &c., as they had better artists in those cities. That is largely true; but nevertheless the figures painted in Nagasaki and other southern ports, though not so perfect in outline, are much more grotesquely diabolical, and so appear more in keeping with the character of the china.

We watched the process from the first outline in black, drawn with a fine brush made of rats' whiskers, to the completely finished picture. Each colour put on has to be baked separately; and so it requires some ten or twelve bakings to perfect the design.

The work was wonderful to watch, marvellously, intricately minute, like everything else produced by these remarkable people. Most of the delicate tracery seemed to be done by boys from designs by one of the older men. A fine bowl was shown us by the guide-proprietor. It would have held about a pint of water, and was an intricate mass of fine gold and black lines. He gave me a magnifying-glass to hold over the bowl; and then I discovered the lines were in reality delicately drawn butterflies. There were twenty-two thousand on the bowl, he informed us, and every one of them fitted accurately in a mosaic so com-

plete that not a pin-point of the underlying basis could be seen.

We found it difficult to tear ourselves away, but night was falling. Our men outside had each lit a coloured paper lantern, which was attached to his 'rickshaw; and all the other "'ricks" we passed were similarly illuminated. Pedestrians on foot had servants walking before them carrying lanterns on the end of long flexible bamboos; all the shop fronts had rows of lanterns along the cornice; and the entire effect was that of a "Fancy Fair."

At the "Oriental Hotel," where we stopped for dinner, we seemed to have suddenly shifted back again 15,000 miles to England; for there a party of four, a typical English family, were sitting in evening dress, going quietly through the menu—a menu that might have graced any restaurant in the environs of Piccadilly Circus. The manager, too, to keep up the illusion, was a German. The only foreign note was the waiters.

The menu card, I noticed, was printed with the dishes numbered 1 to 12; and I could not understand why till I heard a voice say, "Boy, bring me No. 5," and then I understood. The waiters could not understand French, but they knew the numbers of the dishes in English.

Most of these boys learn their English at the missionary schools; they attend these assiduously till they think they have learnt enough English to act as waiters; then they promptly leave.

It was black night, with only a few stars shining, when we left the hotel. A cold raw wind was blowing,

We bundled hastily into our waiting 'rickishaws, and told the men to take us to the hatoba.

Hailing a sampan, we got in.

"Don't say a word," said the Chief. "They'll take us to our ship without our saying which it is."

The two oarsmen stood up to the long sweeps, and pushed out into the darkness. A few faint lights, more than a mile away, showed where the ships lay at anchor.

"That's ours," I said quietly to the Chief.

"Wrong," he said. "You let the sampan-men alone."

I did after that, though I was quite certain we were going all out of our course. They ran us, straight as a dart, to the gangway.

"Wonderful, aren't they?" said the Chief.

It was on the following evening, at the Club, that Captain Outram suggested to the "Old Man," after a game of billiards, that we should have a Japanese dinner. There was a man present who lived "native" in the interior six months in the year. No one knew anything about him except that he was exceedingly quiet, always seemed to have plenty of money, and said he was a commercial traveller. He was popularly supposed to be an international spy. Certainly he could talk English, French, German, Russian, and Japanese with equal facility. The English ladies in Kobe looked askance at him—he had a Japanese wife, some people said several wives.

For some reason or other he seemed inclined to talk

to me; and when Captain Outram said, "Would you like to have a Japanese dinner, Doc.?" he chimed in quietly, "Yes, do. It's an experience, Doc."

"By Jove, the very thing. You're just the man we want, Thompson. You know all about these things. Will you come too?"

Thompson hesitated for just a fraction of a second, and then said, "Thanks, captain; I think I will. I know the very 'yadoya' you want."

We tailed off in our 'rickishaws, after him, out into the night, till, turning up a narrow alley in a back street, he stopped at an open doorway. Into a narrow hall we trooped, to be greeted by a bowing, grey-kimonoed host.

A little maid rapidly removed our boots; and we walked upstairs, on stockinged feet, to the usual Japanese room, devoid of furniture, the floor covered with the usual tatami matting.

Cushions were brought; and we started to make ourselves comfortable. The "Old Man," however, was so stout that he could not get his legs under him comfortably; so they brought a little table piled with cushions, and this he used as a chair.

We left the ordering of the dinner to Thompson, and so he sent for, and had a long conversation with, the cook who was to serve us.

Presently a maid brought in a "hibachi," filled with red-hot charcoal, and set it in the centre of the circle. A round table, about a foot high, with a square hole in the centre, was fitted over the "hibachi," and now the cook reappeared. She carried an affair like a

frying-pan, greased with fat; and attendants brought her the raw materials for the feast, which she proceeded to cook in front of us. Huge bowls of rice with chop-sticks were placed at intervals around the table, opposite each of us. The rice formed the basis of the dinner; and course after course was added by the cook to act as a stimulus to eat more. The "Old Man" and I made very poor hands at manipulating the chop-sticks till Thompson showed us just how, and then we found it not so impossible to raise things to our lips.

I had no idea what I was eating; some of the things were cooked; others appeared to be made up of raw fish; everything was cut up very fine; most of it was decidedly savoury. I could see that Thompson was enjoying himself immensely.

In front of each of us was placed an ampulla of hot "sake," with little drinking cups, and a bowl of clear water. The taste for "sake" is said to be an acquired one. It is easily acquired. To me it tastes like whey with a suspicion of sherry in it. It is inclined to be rather heady. Thompson got through his supply rapidly; and fresh jars kept arriving for him—also for me. A particularly charming little attendant had been deputed to look after me (we each had one, our host, on account of his position, two), and she kept filling up my "sake" cup whenever it showed any signs of emptying. I watched the face of Thompson, opposite me, grow larger and hazier, feeling more and more comfortable; bright lights flashed in front of my eyes at times; voices came somewhat muffled. It began

to dawn on me that I was having too much "sake"!

Then there was an irruption. Three little painted women sidled into the room, each carrying a wooden box like a long plain gun-case. These were the geisha. They bowed to the floor, and said, "Kombanwa." Two of them produced samisens (Japanese guitars) from their cases, and squatted before us. Thompson smiled at the third, dipped his "sake" cup in the water-bowl, and presented it to the geisha. This is the recognised form of salutation to a favourite, like bouquets to a prima donna. The geisha raised it to her forehead; the waiting maid filled it with hot "sake"; she put it to her lips, and then returned it to Thompson.

After that she rose to her feet, and with a fan in her hand went through the celebrated "butterfly" dance, the other two accompanying her on their samisens, singing all the time in the peculiar high screechy note so characteristic of Oriental music. The dancing was all done with the body; there was practically no movement of the feet. Her movements were wonderfully graceful; one felt she ought to appreciate the marvellous skill more.

Thompson's face was a study of delight. He had reached the stage in which to him it was exquisite. We others found it only interesting. When she had finished she dropped on her knees, and touched the matting with her forehead, before us.

It was in the early morning when we finally separated, the "Old Man" and I to the hatoba, where a launch awaited us, the other two to their homes.

As we left the doorsteps in our 'rickishaws, the proprietor, the geisha, and the waiting maids, all assembled, bowed to us profusely; and the host called out the customary salutation to a departing guest, "Sayonara. Mata dozo irasshai." (Farewell! So must we part! Be pleased to come again.)

Horner, the Second Mate, had been sticking to the ship very closely since we had arrived at Kobe. Once or twice I had idly wondered why. On our first excursion ashore the Chief had asked him to accompany us; but he had shuffled out of it; and we had not asked him since. As a companion he was very quiet. If any one had asked me I should have said he was not a man of much imagination, for he was very Saxon in his type, very steady, very reliable, an excellent officer. Sometimes in his watch below he would sit and talk to me, usually of his Devonshire home. His ideal was to make enough money to retire and keep a yacht near Plymouth. We were rather friends.

On the morning of our fourth day in port he came into my cabin, looking somewhat embarrassed. We talked casually for some time about things of no importance; and I could see all the time he wanted to ask me something. I waited patiently, letting him work up to it. Finally he blurted out, "Going ashore to-day, Doc.?"

"Not till evening, I think. The 'Old Man' and I are going with a party of Americans duck-shooting in Osaka Bay," I said.

"What time will you be back?" he said. "I want you to go ashore with me, Doc., rather badly."

There was evidently something on his mind he wanted to tell me very much. I promised to go ashore with him after dark.

"I don't want the Chief to know," he explained diffidently.

I successfully concealed my surprise, and said, "That's all right, old chap. You and I will go ashore, and that's all about it."

We got back before nightfall, the shooting launch, strung with dead duck, looking like a poultry shop. The Americans had arranged a big dinner and a geisha performance for the night. They pressed us to go. The "Old Man" was unable, owing to official business, as we were sailing on the morrow. I had more difficulty in framing a plausible excuse; but I, too, declined. The Second Engineer wanted me to go ashore with him. Again I had to invent difficulties. Night fell; and then feeling like conspirators, the Second Mate and I at length were able to steal away together in a sampan in the dark.

"Read that," said Horner, thrusting a note into my hand.

By the dim light of the sampan lamp I made it out. It was a very artless, simple little note. At the time it made me feel choky. I wish now I had transcribed it, for I can only give it from memory.

"I look see your ship come Kobe side five-six month. Two day your ship come—my heart is very glad. I think you come look see little Ponta. You no come.

Red-faced man, your ship, come 'chaya' (that was the Chief), thin man come (that was meant for me), you no come. What for you no come? My heart is very sad. I think you no love me any more."

I handed it back to him in silence.

"You saw her?" he said.

I nodded.

There was a silence. Suddenly he blurted out, "I'm a d——d fool. I like her so much that it hurts like hell to have a note like that. I didn't know she cared so much. I swore I wouldn't go ashore this trip. I wanted to break it off. It's been going on every voyage now for the last fifteen months. Don't laugh, Doc."

"I'm not laughing."

"Sorry. I know you're not. I've got the jumps, Doc. It's getting worse every voyage. The first time it was all right. We were a week in Kobe; and I used to go up and see her every night. I thought she was a nice little thing. When we left I felt sort of lonely. I was on one of the Pacific boats that trip. We were back from Vancouver about six weeks later; and we stopped a night here. I thought I'd toddle up and see her. She was frightfully glad to see me; and I felt flattered. You know what these girls are. I thought it was rather a score for me, her remembering. Well, I didn't see her again for four months. I had been shifted to another ship; and the Second Engineer was shifted too. The first night here I couldn't get ashore. The Second went; and she recognised him. She inquired for me. I was pretty badly in love with her by

now; and I felt—oh, you know, just how, when he told me she had been asking for me. I was funky of her forgetting now. There was a fat German making eyes at her, the Second said; and of course she had to be civil to him. I wanted to punch that German. That was the voyage before last. I'm getting worse every time. I can't get her out of my head now. I've thought of asking the company to give me a shore billet here, and then buying her off the beastly old ruffian, Ogawa, who employs her. It makes me sick to think of her there, with every dirty American tourist or bloated German making love to her, and her having to put up with it. She wants me to buy her. You think I'm a d——d fool, don't you?"

"How much could you buy out her indentures for?" I asked, evading the question.

"She told me the old devil paid her father 200 yen for a three-years' agreement. I could get her for 300."

This was serious. It was evident he had been making careful inquiries.

"I'm absolutely miserable about it," he added dismally.

Of course he hadn't got the money. A sailor never has any money; and even if he had had, and bought her, it would have meant exile in a foreign land and the end of his career to have settled down with her. He was on the "roster" for promotion to First Mate. In ten years' time he might be looking forward to a captaincy. The thing from the standpoint of the

world was ridiculous. But I was not the world, and had no intention of playing the part of Mr. Worldly Wiseman.

At the foot of the hills we got out.

"The waterfall place is shut at night," he said. "She'll be in the 'Lotus-Leaf' now."

The house was dark; the "amado" closed when we arrived; but a number of 'rickishaws round the dim-lit door, and the tinkle of the samisen within, told that something was going on.

Ogawa, the proprietor, a little wizened ruffian in a grey kimono, received us obsequiously; but at our request shook his head regretfully.

"No. The most beautiful Ponta could not be seen. She was entertaining four honourable gentlemen with the music."

He said it with a cunning smile, watching us all the time.

He knew Horner, of course; and probably was afraid he might attempt to pay her father's debts, and so take her away from the tea-shop.

At the same time he wanted to have any money we were spending; and so did not wish to turn us from his door. Moreover, if he made difficulties, and we were not content with other entertainers, he probably thought that a little delay would make us offer a better price for the music.

"I must see her," said Horner. "Tell the honourable four to clear out."

Ogawa was pathetically helpless in his gestures. The honourable four had specially asked for the

most beautiful Ponta. How could he offend his most honourable guests?

Horner was inarticulate with rage. I watched the man shrewdly, and thought he was lying; so I nudged Horner to be quiet, and explained that we were very sorry. We had hoped to spend the evening in his honourable house; we had wanted two beautiful maidens with samisens to entertain us; but—well, we sailed in the morning, and must go elsewhere for our last evening.

Horner made a movement forward. I held him back.

"It's all right, man; he's bluffing for more money," I said in a quick aside.

Ogawa suggested then that perhaps the honourable gentlemen might care to see some of the others. There were several of the most beautiful——

I turned away resolutely, catching Horner by the arm. We walked a yard or two.

"I can't Doc.," said Horner miserably; "I feel that I want to wring the old ruffian's neck. I must go back. I must see her."

I began to fear he was getting out of hand; but just then the little man came running after us. The honourable four, it seemed, had just asked for their bill; they would be going soon; and if the honourable gentlemen would deign to wait a little in his miserable house——

We had not long to wait. A little maid brought in the glowing hibachi and a pile of cushions. We squatted, warming our hands over the charcoal flame,

each lighting a cigarette. Horner was irritable with suspense. The tinkle of the music still came to us through the thin paper partition. Then a shutter moved, and she came listlessly in, followed by another, whom I recognised as Hari, carrying a samisen.

In a moment she uttered a queer little gulping cry; her little white tabi flashed across the matting; there was an iridescent flash of garments; and she was in his arms. I turned my head away and stared at Hari, who was watching with eager eyes. I could hear him murmuring, "Sweetheart—sweetheart—sweetheart," and her sobbing quietly, and murmuring softly inarticulate words of endearment in response.

I kept staring still at Hari.

Presently a voice said, half confusedly, "Sorry, Doc. You can look round now, if you like. She won't mind."

Hari smiled at me.

"You give me a cigarette?" she said coaxingly; and the tension was over.

Soon three of us were squatting on our cushions around the hibachi; the fourth was Horner, and he lay at full length on the matting, looking up into Ponta's face, his head resting on her knees. We talked—how we talked. They laughed—how they laughed. Hari played the samisen and sang. Ponta smiled down on him, and ruffled his hair tenderly with her fingers. It was very fine, golden, and curly—a constant wonder to her. It dawned on me for the first time that Horner was very good-looking. Half

an hour before I had thought him a fool. Now I found myself beginning to envy him.

"Why the deuce don't you make love to Hari?" he said contentedly.

"She say she likee you very-much," said Ponta encouragingly.

They brought us rice and chicken in bowls, with chop-sticks. The two little women shrieked with laughter at our attempts to use the sticks. They brought us hot "sake" in little silver ampullæ; and we exchanged cups of ceremony. I could feel a gentle languor stealing over me. With very little persuasion I should have fallen asleep; and it was with an effort I looked at my watch. It was past midnight.

"We'd better be going," I said.

Ponta looked up quickly; then she pressed his head more down on her lap without a word.

"We're going to stop the night," he said. Then more quickly added, "I can't go, old chap. Oh, d—n. Don't leave me."

"We sail at nine o'clock," I reminded him, feeling like a brute.

"I don't want to think of it. Stay with me, like a good fellow. We'll clear out at six. I may never see her again."

Of course it was all wrong. We were only putting off the evil hour. I knew it would be just as bad in the morning, and I said so. The more I talked the more obstinate he became; and all the while her fingers

played with his hair. She never said a word. The Japanese woman is trained to conceal her emotions. I knew all the time it was useless arguing with him. I only did it because I felt I must. I knew also that I dare not leave him alone in the state of mind he was in at the moment; and so I agreed at last to stay the night with him, if the "yadoya" could accommodate us, feeling that if I left him he would probably fail to rejoin the ship at all. The proprietor was called, and said we could have a room. That settled it.

They brought us each a big kimono, some rugs, and a little wooden Japanese pillow. That was our bedroom furniture. We discarded the pillows, and substituted two or three cushions. With these we knew we would be quite comfortable, sleeping on the tatami matting. Six months previously I could not possibly have slept thus; but a period of nights on deck during the hot weather in the Indian Ocean had taught me how to be comfortable without a mattress. Hari promised to call us at five-fifty, and soon I was half asleep; but in my somnolent state I could still hear the quiet, insistent talking of the Mate in the room I had left; and when I finally fell asleep his couch was still unoccupied.

It was a very cross Second Mate who gave directions aft when we were moving out from Kobe in the morning. Yokohama bound. The A.B.'s could not make out what had come over his usually sunny temper.

"I'm sick of life," he said to me, in passing. I could only look sympathetic.

A sister ship of ours, the *Dardanus*, flying the "Nippon Yusen Kaisha" flag, on commission, was due to sail an hour after us. She was a faster boat than ours; and as we steamed past her they chaffed us from the deck, wanting to know if we had any messages for Yokohama. Nothing annoys a sailor more than that; and we retorted to the best of our ability. I am certain, therefore, that the "Old Man" and the Chief pushed the ship a bit, for it was some hours later before we sighted her smoke astern.

Do what we could, however, she was rapidly overhauling us, until quite unexpectedly, Nature came to our relief. We were in the narrows, just before leaving the Inland Sea to shoot out into the Pacific, when suddenly, without any warning, we ran into a fog bank. Then the hooter went furiously; and we could hear the answering hoot of the *Dardanus* astern.

We circled in the fog for perhaps a quarter of an hour, till suddenly again it lifted, and we saw the lighthouse on the port quarter. The "Old Man" knew then exactly where we were; full steam ahead was ordered; and we shot out into the Pacific.

But the *Dardanus* was not so lucky. She lay enveloped for hours, and consequently was still ten miles astern late that same evening. It was, therefore, not till well on in the night that she passed us far out to starboard.

The coast was very indistinct as we steamed along it in the early morning. The volcano on Vries Island

was not visible; and sacred Fujiyama, the most beautiful mountain in Japan, lay enveloped in mists out of sight.

As we approached Yokohama we saw the *Dardanus* lying at anchor, to pass the quarantine; and so she got in barely an hour in front of us.

Yokohama harbour is one of the finest in the Far East. There is a huge breakwater, outside of which lie those lepers of the sea, the "oil-ships," and inside, a multitude of ships of every nation. No one is allowed to smoke on board the oil-ships; and they are never admitted near other shipping. Only the week before there had been an accident. A lighter had had its tanks filled with petroleum from one of them, and was sailing into harbour, when the wife of the "dendo" (Japanese captain of the lighter) dropped a lighted match in her little cabin aft. The explosion that followed blew lighter and crew into eternity. Luckily it happened outside the breakwater.

We were all looking forward to our letters from home, as we had missed them at Kobe; and so it was with much disappointment we found that all our mails had been lost in the wreck of the *Dakota*, the huge American mail-boat that had run ashore two days previously. The Chief talked as if it had been done especially to spite him. As it was, he was the only one to receive anything. It was an empty, delicately scented, mauve-coloured envelope, posted in London, and written in an unknown female hand. To this day he has never been able to discover whom it was from. We said it was a romance nipped in the bud. He as-

sented it was probably a bill. The Chief is a confirmed bachelor.

The usual inundation of curio-dealers followed our anchoring; but in addition a number of 'rickshaw men boarded the ship and presented their cards. The advent of trams in Yokohama has cut seriously into their earnings, and there is a great struggle between them, therefore, for custom. As with cabmen at home, there is a regular tariff; but, like the London cabby, they try to get as much more as possible; and many are the wrangles one has, if one objects to extortion.

I hired a man by the day, paid him 1 yen 50 sen (three shillings), and had him waiting at the hatoba whenever I wanted him. Any day I was not ashore I paid him just the same; and I found the system excellent and the man absolutely reliable. He was always there, no matter what time I wanted him, night or day.

The Mate had been instructed by his wife to buy her enough silk to make a dress. The colour she said was to be heliotrope; and he was very much afraid he'd get the wrong shade. Accordingly he got the Chief and myself to fortify him in his search, and we all went together to one of the big silk shops, so that by our combined wisdom we might lessen the chance of error.

Before we could even state what we wanted we were served with tea. This, it appeared, was the custom of the house. Afterwards they were all attention to our needs. It was with regret that we found we could not get what we wanted. We were bowed out as politely as if we had bought the complete stock. In



YOKOHAMA HARBOUR.

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the Benton-Dori we found what, after much vacillation, appeared to be the thing. It turned out afterwards that our "combined wisdom" had been completely wrong. The Mate's wife refused to wear the stuff. She was "that kind of a woman," the Chief said; but I have an uneasy suspicion she may have been right.

After the exertion of choosing the silk we wandered at our ease amongst the curio-stores. The place was inundated with American tourists, careering all over the city in 'rickishaws, gesticulating, shouting out "Ohio" ("Ohayo" is the Japanese for "Good-day"), behaving with a rude vulgarity exceedingly distasteful, talking, boasting, making loud remarks, mostly disparaging, on every one and everything, regardless of the fact that nearly all the shopkeepers understood English. They were mostly passengers from the wreck of the *Dakota*; and we were pleased to see that they were being charged three prices for everything, the polite Japs thus taking their revenge.

It is difficult to explain why tourists of every country, including our own, show their worst side abroad. It is indefensible anywhere. In Japan, where even the coolie is a gentleman, it is unpardonable.

Every one who has ever been in Yokohama talks about the "Bluffs" and "Mississippi Bay." It is the European quarter of Yokohama; and here one finds the "exiles," the people who have taught the Japanese the modern way, and who are now being discarded by their precocious pupils, to their no small discomfort and annoyance. They talk of ingratitude, sharp practices.

cheeseparings economies; abuse the country, the climate, the morals, arts, everything except the courage of the people.

The houses of these exiles strike the very latest note in early Victorian furniture, probably because most of the stuff has been made in Japan from faulty European models, for the European furniture made in Japan is unspeakably bad, just as the European architecture of the Government buildings is of the poorest "work-house" pattern.

The houses on the Bluffs are very jerry-built. There is nearly always a pathetic attempt to have everything about them as ultra-English, as little Japanese, as possible—English flowers and fruits in the garden, English pictures on the walls, heavy English china ornaments on the mantel-shelves, even Britannia metal teapots.

It is easy to laugh at it all; but six months' residence brings understanding; for the people—the only people—who appreciate England are those who have had to live out of it. There are no Little Englanders amongst her sons abroad.

It was St. Patrick's Night; and they were giving an Irish concert at the Bluffs. The concert-hall might have been the school-room of the parish church in any village in the Midlands—a little oblong building, with rows of hard American pitch-pine seats, and a raised platform at one end, on which stood a harmonium.

The dresses of the ladies were just enough behind the fashion to strengthen the impression of the country village.

They played duets; they sang, mostly from Moore's Irish Melodies, as it was an Irish concert. None of them sang very well; but it was very pleasant. One young fellow recited. He was the funny man. The medical missionary's daughter said to me, "You will enjoy him. He's just too killing."

He thought so, too, himself. They all liked him. They laughed uproariously at his jokes, jokes with whiskers on them, and screamed at his comic recitations—recitations of the "Bell's Elocutionist" type. They thought he was immense. I laughed with the rest, not wishing to appear *blasé* or uninterested. They had been kind enough to send me a special invitation when they heard I was an Irishman. To me the whole performance was very pathetic.

Then the end came. Every one stood up; the men threw back their shoulders; the women drew themselves erect; every cheek was flushed; every eye glistened. They were singing "God save the King."

It was not two hurried bars by a foreign orchestra whilst every one is scurrying to get on their wraps and out before the crush. No. They stood up to it and sang it—sang it as if they meant it. One has to go outside England to hear "God save the King" sung properly.

Then they separated; and the light outside, shining on the yellow faces of the 'rickshaw men, reminded them of what, for the time being, they had forgotten—that they were 15,000 miles from home.

Every day we were in Yokohama was to be our last.

We were being sent to Saigon; we were going to Manila; we were positively being sent to Shanghai. It was a different tale with the "Old Man" every morning at breakfast. The Mate snorted, "We're going to Java, Doc. You see if I'm not right."

I wanted to go up country to Nikko, to see what are probably the most wonderfully beautiful temples in the world. But we were under orders for twenty-four hours' notice; and I could not go. I haunted temples, went to see the great bronze Buddha at Kamakura, planned to go to the hot baths of Myanoshita. One morning the surgeon of the *Dardanus* and I decided to go to Tokyo. At the railway station all the clerks in the booking offices were girls, most of whom spoke excellent English. There was a restaurant, with an excellent menu, which we sampled. The menu-card was printed in Japanese and English. The railway carriages were of the corridor type, like those of the Underground in London. We ran smoothly across the great plain of Tokyo, through a country which was a mass of cherry-blossom.

At the Shimbashi station in Tokyo we went to the jinrickshaw office, paid a fee, and so hired a 'rickshaw man each for the day. Had we known it there were electric cars all through the city. In spite of that, however, Tokyo is still very Japanese. It is an immense city of some millions of inhabitants; and when once one gets out of the great main streets one sees that it is as Japanese as Shimonoseki.

We lunched at the "Imperial," the most magnificent hotel in the Far East. A party of very smart Japan-

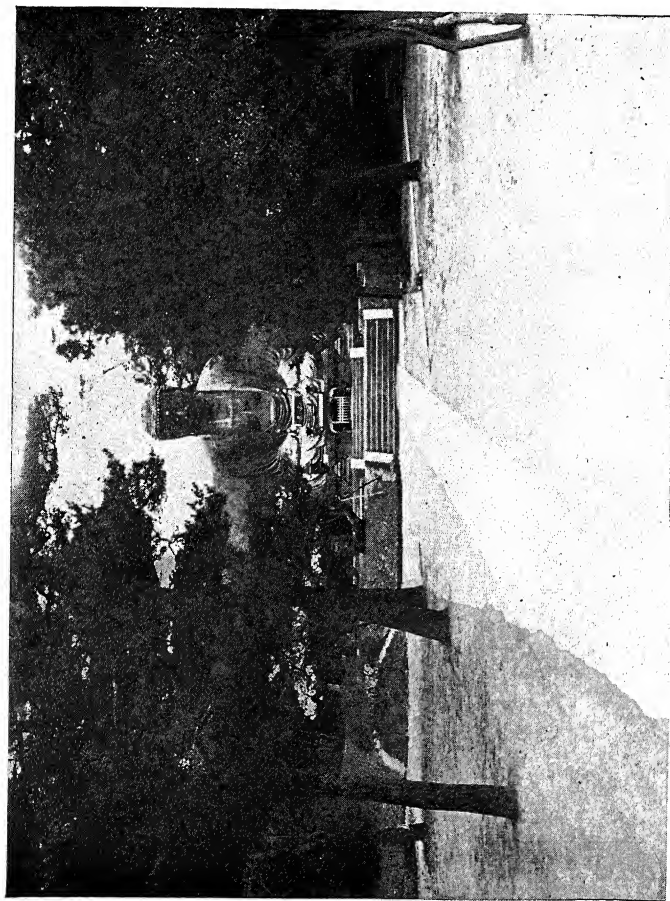


Photo: Dr. Shipway.

THE BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA.

[Facing page 210.]

ese officers of the Imperial Guard, in full-dress uniform, were lunching in the restaurant, and were a source of much interest to the American tourists, who were flooding the place.

After lunch we started doing temples. One gets rather too many temples in Japan. Many of them are little more than glorified huts; but the temples in Shiba, containing the graves of six of the Tokugawa Shoguns, with their wonderful gold lacquer, and the imposing rows of votive lanterns, should be missed by no one who wishes to see what Japanese art at its very best can do. There is an air of solemn grandeur and immemorial calm about them that wraps one round as with a mantle while the guide walks reverently from tomb to tomb, talking of the bygone splendours of these Tycoon Emperors. Instinctively one's voice lowers in the presence of the mighty dead; and, like Agag, one treads delicately around the dust of these buried Cæsars.¹

The same feeling follows one when one is viewing what the public is permitted to see of the Imperial Palace. The priest-like seclusion of the Mikado is a thing of the past; but the tradition of the Son of Heaven is difficult to eradicate; and old-fashioned Japanese still reluctantly regret the presence of his statue exposed to the gaze of every passer-by in the Imperial Museum, considering it as a sacrilege almost that any one should be permitted to look even on the counterfeit representation of the Emperor.

¹ Since these lines were written this beautiful temple, alas, has been destroyed by one of those disastrous fires so frequent in Tokyo.

But that the old order changeth nothing could have proved more eloquently than the first sight we saw after leaving the palace. It was some thirty Russian cannon captured in Manchuria, and arranged in one of the public parks, opposite the War Office, an ugly red-brick building, looking like a block of artisans' flats.

At a tea-house, the "Soyoken," run on European lines, we were much interested in watching a number of Japanese students, under the guidance of an elderly man, sitting on chairs and trying to handle spoons, knives, and forks in European style, solemnly watching and imitating their leader all the while, like a gymnasium class following the movements of the instructor.

It must have been extremely uncomfortable for them; but they went through it solemnly as a duty. It was a part of their education, for the secret of their marvellous success is that they study even the minutest details. We caught them surreptitiously watching us. My companion inadvertently started balancing his spoon on the edge of his cup; and we smiled furtively when we saw four of them imitate him. But, all the same, the thing impressed us. These were the men of the New Japan; and they were being trained to hold their own with ease amongst Europeans.

Outside, in a little grove not far off, was a bronze statue of the Great Buddha ("Daibutsu"), and close to the statue a huge bronze bell, with an intensely sweet, low note. Once or twice the bell boomed softly as we sat at ease. Finally we moved over to have a

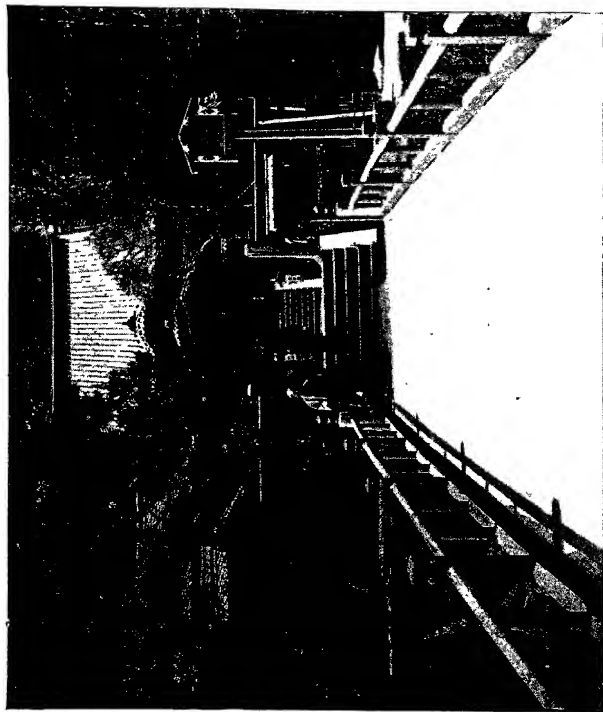


Photo: Dr. Shigeno.

AT THE SHIBA TEMPLE.

look. A little old withered woman had just arrived before the bell, which was swung so that its base hung about three feet above the ground. The bell itself was about fifteen feet high, and six or seven feet in diameter at the mouth. Instead of a metal clapper it had a bamboo pole, with a drumstick head at one end, hanging suspended by the middle. The old woman seized the pole and swung it against the side of the bell, once, twice, thrice, and again we heard the low, sweet sound ring out softly in the still afternoon air. Then slowly she turned to the face of the inscrutable Buddha, and, dropping on her knees, offered up a prayer. That was the Old Japan, the Japan of the Samurai and the "Forty-seven Ronins," whose tombs we had been gazing at in the morning. It was a charming Old Japan, hopelessly picturesque, impossible to sustain. The marvel is that it lasted as long as it did. We felt privileged to have seen even a little of the last of it.

The next day we got our final orders. We were going to Java. The Mate had been right after all; and this was to be our last day in Yokohama.

"Have you ever seen massage after the Japanese manners?" said the Chief. I confessed I had not.

"It's as good as a Turkish bath," he said enthusiastically. "I tell you what, Doc. We'll walk over the Bluffs to Honmoku, through the rice-fields, go to a tea-house I know, and have the old blind masseur in."

It was a beautiful spring afternoon; and we were in a pleasant glow when at length we reached the

village by the sea. The tea-houses were on the sea-shore; and little landing stages ran out from them into the water, so that one could walk straight off the balcony and plunge into the Pacific. It was too early in the year however, for bathing; and so after a smoke, and the inevitable tea, we surrendered ourselves to the masseur. All masseurs in Japan are blind men, as their hands are wonderfully supple, on account of their greater delicacy of touch. In Europe massage is always done in the direction of the venous flow; but, as one might expect, in Japan they do the exact reverse. I am puzzled to this day to know which is right. At any rate, when we got out of the masseur's hands we both had a feeling of intense exhilaration, so much so that we decided to walk the whole way back.

It was dark and the way was winding, a mere track amongst the "paddy-fields." We wandered off into a bamboo grove, and wandered out again; dogs barked at us in the night. We still pushed on. The rice-fields on either side were bare of vegetation; the path was a mere track in the darkness; not a soul passed; not a sign of habitation was anywhere.

At last we saw a light in the distance, far off to the left; and stumbling across found that we had left the path completely. Except for the light in one corner the house was in total darkness. Stumbling over the threshold of the verandah, my foot struck something soft; and I should have fallen had not an arm thrown up, unexpectedly and rather discomposingly, from below steadied me. It was the body of a man sleeping out in the verandah I had almost fallen over. With-

out a word he rose, threw open a door, and we found we had run across one of the smaller "yadoyas" frequented by the poorer merchant class.

We were very tired and hungry; they had no European food; there was only one steel fork, and one pewter spoon in the house; but nevertheless we managed to make a very satisfactory meal from rice and hard-boiled eggs, the Chief using the spoon and I the fork.

Afterwards the proprietor put us on the right track again, and with a polite "Sayonara" bade us farewell.

"There's one thing about Japan," said the Chief. "It's the safest country in the world to get lost in. Everybody helps one. I've never heard of even a drunken man being robbed."

We tramped on steadily in the night. Chayas and lights were now quite frequent; and soon we saw the dim outline of a wall and the gateway of a house.

"We've got to the Bluffs at last," said the Chief with a grunt of satisfaction.

The tinkle of a 'rickishaw bell came to us in the night. Then one kurumaya appeared from round the corner, with the lantern of his 'rickishaw lit; and he was quickly followed by another. We each got into one, and called out "Hatoba." Then the men started.

Going down from the Bluffs to the Bund there is a very long, steep hill.

"Hold tight," shouted the Chief from the 'rickishaw in front. Our men had started slowly; but gradually they gained momentum; and soon we were flying down the incline at breakneck pace. Their feet seemed

barely to touch the ground. I felt as though my last hour had come. Suddenly we came to a sharp turn; and the men swerved quickly, leaping sideways in the air, swinging the light cars round by their weight. Down they came on their feet again, and continued their breakneck run. It was like bob-sleighing without the snow. A feeling of exhilaration came over us; unconsciously I found myself shouting encouragement. Down we swept, past 'rickishaws painfully crawling up the hill, past brightly lighted shops, past hurrying pedestrians, till at last, panting and exhausted, the men slowed up on the crowded level highway of the Bund.

When we got back to the ship all was confusion. We sailed for Soerabaya, in Java, on the morrow, and some of the cargo was not yet in. A huge arc-light hung over the ship; and the winches were working furiously; but as I had nothing to do with cargo I turned in, and in spite of the tumultuous noises soon was fast asleep.

Some time in the early morning, however, they finished; and then the stillness woke me up.

It was a beautiful clear day when we said farewell; and the beloved Fujiyama shone inland like a great pink down-turned fan, rosy in the dawn, a picture of absolute loveliness, as we steamed out slowly through the breakwater, past the forts and the four great Japanese cruisers, dipping their flags ceremoniously to us as we crossed their beam.

That night before turning in I was going to put some plates in my camera, but laziness suggested